Lubrications

By Bill Long

BEN M. CURTIS
TULSA, OKLA.

Publications

By Bill Long

LUBRICATIONS

By

W. G. (BILL) LONG

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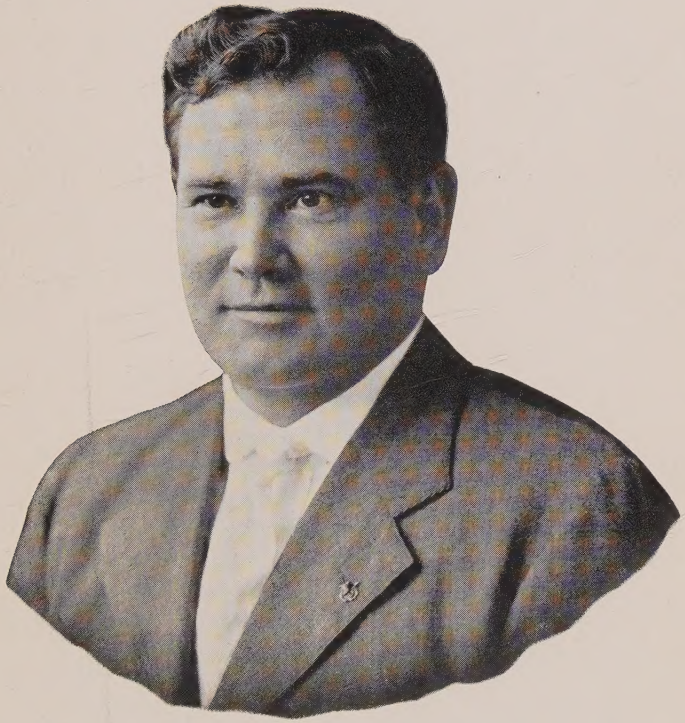

W. G. (BILL) LONG

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THEY ARE FOR YOU

YOU who have climbed to the top
When the derrick was covered with snow;
You who have made the drill drop
In the sun-set's evening glow.

You who have sweated and wrought
From Pensy's ice-laden hills,
To the sun-set's flowery spot
Through Illinois ague and chills.

Reached for the magic wealth,
Vintage of desperate years;
Sought it at night by stealth
Embittered by unshed tears.

I sing these songs for you:
You, whose flesh shows the brand;
To you who know they are true,
God knows that you'll understand.

INTRODUCTION

THE OIL MAN'S CREED

WE believe in this life. We believe that nature intended all men to be equal according to his worthy desires.

We believe in making the best of the present, forgetting the bad of the past, striving earnestly for the future betterment of all.

We believe when the wheel of fortune is turned, that the best servant will be the best master; the mistakes we have made in the past will be the guiding buoy of the coming years. True equality is the equality of all.

We believe to err is human, but to make the same mistake twice is a crime. The dusters and the gushers are but the crucible that separates the dross from the pure gold of life.

We believe that when we die our bodies return to dust whence the caldron nature uses it to bring forth the pink-hearted rose and the blushing fruit.

We believe in the immortal soul, it is ours to burnish, brighten and glorify, or to shrivel, blacken and damn.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE *National Petroleum News,* having used a great number of these "Rhymes" in their publication, I hereby acknowledge my appreciation of the good fellowship of Warren C. Platt, its editor, who has kindly allowed their use in this book.

The writer has taken liberties with the following authors: Rudyard Kipling; Robert Service; Wordsworth; Edgar A. Guest; and others, for which he apologizes.

THE AUTHOR.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
The Soliloquy of Oil	11
They Are There	13
The Driller	15
Its Fascination	16
Abandoned	17
At Parker on the Hill	18
The Song of the Derelict	20
I'm a Wise Guy	22
Randlet, Oklahoma (A Letter)	23
A Producer's Dream in Tulsa	24
The Tooley	25
The Evolution of the Roustabout	27
The Truth	30
The Leaser's Argument	31
More Pipe Lines	32
When It's All Off	33
To Cushing	26
Irish Mary	34
The Ghost of Barney Tholoco	36
Tommy Atkins	39
The Oil Country Tommy Atkins	41
Alas, Poor Paden	42
The Oil Country Vampire	44
The Analyzing Oil Editor	45
East or West It Is the Same	46
The Old Man's Lament	47

CONTENTS

PAGE

O You Kitty! 49
The Law of the Oil Field 50
The Farmer's Sand 52
Reminiscent 53
The Dreamer 54
Tell Them Again to Me 55
Genius 57
Lament to Bacchus 58
Farewell, Doctor Booze 59
Texas 60
Requiem to the Power That Was 62
The Investigating Spirit of Congress 62
My Flag 64
Just Tired 65
His Oil Country Shack 66
Der Tag 67
The Devil's Soliloquy on the Kaiser 68
1909 69
1914 70
Our Flag 29
Give and You Shall Receive 72
To James Whitcomb Riley 72
May 30, 1908 74
The Pants That Mother Made 75
Bill 78
If You Were Mine 79
The Girl in Dixie 80
The Cry of the Tame 51
Memories of a Valentine 81
When Mother's Gone 82

CONTENTS

PAGE

Thanksgiving Thought 63
At Fifty-five 83
A Warning to Colored Brothers 84
The Wail of the Fat Man 71
Who's to Blame? 85
Going Home 86
The Death of Mark Twain 87
Thanksgiving 88
Friendship 88
Canandaigua in a Frenzy 89
Why Not? 89
When I Am Fifty and You Are Five 90
Pre-Nuptial Shower 91
Violets 91
Wouldn't This Be a Dream? 92
The Home on the River Hill 93
Father's Got a Job 94
Spring Troubles 95
Hallowe'en 96
Laddie 97
Spring 98
Our Day Dreams 98
All His Labors Are Vain 99
Our Good Friend $$$$$ 100
The Old Bucket Shop 101
If I Should Die Tonight 102
Dem Guys Next Door 103
When the Ice is in the Rye 103
Optimistic Bill 105
The Grafter 107
To My Book 107
The Apology 108

THE SOLILOQUY OF OIL

I HAVE been buried in subterranean caverns for a million years. What will the earth's axis do without my lubrication?

A half a century ago I was liberated, bridled, saddled, and made subservient to the will of man. My Liberator's voice speaks from the exhausts of thousands of engines, for from my storehouse comes their power.

I am the lubricator of the wheels of commerce, the bearer of human freight and grain is whirled across a continent because I am in their journals.

I light the great cathedral with the waxen taper. The poor and lowly, the great and affluent, use me to light their pathway to knowledge.

I am the tireless servant of millions. I brighten up the midnight darkness of the gloomy world, and illuminate the home of the peasant and prince. Without me the air would have remained unconquered. I am the power that drives the brain child of Wright Brothers through eternal space.

It is I that tears the lightning from the heavens and makes it a plaything for the child. I plow the unbroken fields and harvest the golden grain. My body is laid upon the streets of magnificent cities, happy in feeling the footsteps of children, and I laugh at the great burdens in the despatch of business. I am the builder of empires and the destroyer of kings. I move the death dealing instruments of war. I grease the passage of the great ship in her initial plunge on the breast of the ocean. Without me the world would be helpless.

I am the soul of printers' ink and a million readers hear me speak. I am the builder of cities, my derricks stab the new world's sky, and my golden shafts kiss the noon-day sun. Man brought me forth and I mastered him. I make him bow and cringe and at night pray to my golden calf. In man's quest for me he has been made a pauper. I pick the beggar up and set him in a palace. I am his menial. I clean his clothes and polish his floors.

My breath blazes forth in the kitchen, to cook his food. He warms his feet by my flickering flame in his parlor. Yon graceful car, so strong and beautiful, has concealed within its body a part of me. I am its heart and through my pulsations the Master produces strength, speed and efficiency.

I furnish the disc that brings the God-hewn voice through its throat of brass that time will not destroy. Man cannot live without me. I bring life, its joys and its sorrows. I grease the channel of man's entrance into the world; I seal his casket when he leaves. To think that I, with all my power, comfort and efficiency lay millions of years waiting for the hand of the dreamer.

THEY ARE THERE

IF I were looking for soldiers with good red blood in their veins;
If I were hunting for manhood, men careless of scars and pains;
If I were looking for Nobles,—men that you cannot defeat;
I would never go to the city to hunt its stifled street.

If I were hunting a soldier for a battle, or say, for this life,
I would hike me off to the oil field, get men who are used to strife;
Men who climb the derrick when it staggers from spudding line
Like a careening ship in a typhoon or swaying like a forest pine.

There I would find my model, one who was quick to feel
That this whole life is a warfare, one with nerves of steel;
One that can build a city, one that can drill a well,
For water is all important when cannons belch forth their hell.

Men who are true to their friendship, who love our own green sod;
Men who bend knees to no one but women, her home and their God.
If I were looking for true men, men who fear not the moil,
I would leave city and village and go where they're drilling for oil.

These are soldiers of fortune, men that establish their fame
Sucking the oil from earth's bosom; building in honor, not shame.
Dragging from the old world's store-house the fluid of amber gold,

Made after God's own image, moulded in God's own mould.

This is the place to find them; some will curse as they toil,
Yet tenderly care for a brother smoothing his troubles like oil,
With hands that are blistered and swollen gently caressing the face
Of the injured, broken brother—you will find him in no other place.

A PRODUCER'S DREAM IN TULSA

HE lay upon his Ostermoor; the stars winked overhead,
He heard his Bessemer engine back fire from its shed;
He saw the golden, sparkling oil flow from his leading line,
He smiled as Angels whispered (it seemed almost divine).
He saw his tanks all laden with one dollar five cent oil,
And the pipe line people say to him, "Let us pay you for your toil."
He saw the market going up, his wells increased his gold,
The pipe lines were sorry that he had never sold.
They did not wake him from his dreams, it was so sweet and real
They let him have those fragrant flowers, without the stab of steel.
So they let him smile in happiness, for to him it was so sweet
They took a knife and cut his throat while he was fast asleep.

MORAL: There is no difference between cutting a man's throat and letting the sunshine into his entrails, than to cut his meal ticket off and let the sun shine through them.

THE DRILLER

YES! he wore the old blue overalls, emblem of his trade;
His hands were hard and calloused, his clear eyes unafraid.
Was a pioneer at Bradford—felled the hemlock and the pine
To build the hemlock cities all along the ancient line.
He wrests the golden fluid from earth's maternal breast,
Builds homes for the producers, by his patient toil and zest.

As they pioneered the "gold-fields" back in forty-nine,
So he opened up the oil-fields, on the five and forty line.
He is found at work in Canada 'mid winter's fiendish blast,
Is ready to climb to the pinnacle, be it a derrick or a mast;
No matter if ice-laden, no odds if night or day,
He laughs at threatened dangers, the drill he drives to the pay.

He never plays to the galleries, he is wise and sane,
A fine, big-hearted fellow; sometimes a little profane,
Stationed out in the wilderness, near to nature's heart,
Working with brain and muscle, wisely playing his part:
It may be the crowded oil fields, or possibly alone,
He is ever true to duty, ever thinking of home.

Don't listen to the stories told on this man of toil,
Don't heed the forked tongue gossips, of this pioneer in oil,
For he is the old farm product, the kind that is ever first
To blaze the trail thro' forests, 'mid its fever and its thirst;
The first to touch with magic wand, and bring the golden flow;
He's the best old scout on God's green earth—I'm a driller myself and I know.

ITS FASCINATION

HOW I hated it like Hell in the beginning
As on tower at midnight I'd tramp;
The smell of the hemlock and manila,
The smoke of the old derrick lamp
Made me wish for the life that never knew harness
And the peaceful old home where the whippoorwill calls
Away from the oil-field with all its mad pleasures,
But the men of the oil-field, I am stuck on them all.

I remember at Richburg when I was a novice
At pointing the augers that drill the oil well;
My back was as stiff as if cased in a bodice,
And, Oh! how I wished the whole country in Hell.
The alarm clock rang out the hour of midnight,
As I grabbed my "old clothes" to answer its call;
Picked up the "sav-can" to tramp thro' the snow drifts—
It was Hell to get used to, but I now love it all.

There is no place on earth that I love and cherish
As the fields where the derricks pierce the blue sky;
No place on earth where my evil thoughts perish,
As when I hear the screech of the beam's wailing cry.
Here's hoping that I shall never retire
To the city or farm away from its strife;
There is nothing on earth that will quench my desire,
If the oil-fields keep calling me back to its life.

Go curse it—you craven, you who are beat;
Go back to the country, the town and its moil!
She scorns your discomfort, gloats your defeat,
To the strong and courageous she gives up her oil.
The faint-hearted critter she claws to the bone,
She's as cruel as Hell, and as bitter as gall;
She'll embrace but the strong and give them a home—
It's the life of the strong man, and I love it all.

ABANDONED

THE beam is standing on its end;
The derrick's warped and bent,
The engine has no power to send,
For the steam in the boiler's spent.
The wind howls thro' the loosened girt,
The band wheel's rent and drawn;
The bull-wheel's grooves are filled with dirt,
The bull rope frayed and worn.
The engine's still, and red with dust,
The crown wheel's ceased to scream;
The drillers gone and left their trust,
Just another shattered dream.

Yet I saw that rig when all was bright,
And the driller stood at the wheel;
And thro' the stillness of the night
I heard the sand-sheave squeal.
No sweeter music could one hear,
No golden tinted sky
Was half so bright, or half so dear,
As the flare of lamps, the wheel's wild cry.
It brought sweet rest to the tired mind,
It sang me to sleep with its screech;
It renewed fond hopes that were left behind,
And brought them within my reach.

Now darkness deep, and silence drear
Surrounds that spire of hope;
No more we'll see a ghostly light, or hear
The creak of the driller's rope.
We played the hand dealt from the pack,
Above board and on the square;
We followed the old and beaten track,
With the gamblers' reckless air;
We washed the slush for its hidden sign,
While our hopes were running high,
We applied the glass, on the oozing slime
In vain, for the sand was dry.

AT PARKER ON THE HILL

A DRILLER from Pennsylvania lay dying in Illinois,
The only hands to care for him were the hard hands of the boys;
A tooley knelt beside him to hear what he might say,
And carry his last message to his friends in old P-a.
The dying driller muttered as he raised his palsied hand:
"I never more shall see my own, my distant native land;
Take a message as a token (and his eyes began to fill),
To my birthplace up at Parker, at Parker on the hill.

Just tell those ancient knockers that their prophecy's not true,
Although I'm dying in Illinois without a single sou—
That the hangman did not get me, to hang me on the rack
And I'll haunt those old-time gossips, because I'm coming back.
Though I've lied like hell to farmers, and drank their bitter Jav—
Ate their punk and side-meat and their Butler county sav;
I never drank the moonshine from Virginia's hidden still,
Because I came from Parker, from Parker on the hill.

It has been a hellish battle, and not always on the square,
For I was always handicapped, was kicked at everywhere.
I have played the cards life dealt me, with their joy or with their pain;
Still I never struck the fallen foe nor stole his hard-earned gain.

But have moiled with hands all blistered, seeking hidden wealth,
Yet I never used vile methods or went at night, by stealth.
I have used an honest yardstick, the measure'd always fill—
For I was born at Parker, at Parker on the hill.

So take this message back to them and tell them how I
died,—
Be silent on my wayward ways, don't tell them how I've
lied.
Tell them that no Angels came a-fluttering on the wing,
And that I thought of friendly ones, left off the gossip's
sting.
Just say that I forgave them. . . . (My God, but the
world is cold!)
And tell them how I've labored, garnering the sheaves of
gold;
Say how I made the anvil ring, or drove the mighty drill,
For I was born at Parker, at Parker on the hill.

His voice was growing husky . . . his eyes a ghastly
stare . . .
The oil lamp in the "Rag-house" winked out a ghostly
glare;
In fancy once again he saw that kind old mother's face
Across the spectered chasm—out in eternal space.
The death sweat stood out on his brow, he called that
precious name . . .
Coming, mother . . . coming . . . hallowed be thy
name.
The hands that turned the temper-screw, lay cold, and
white and still—
The driller's spirit was at rest—at Parker on the hill.

THE SONG OF THE DERELICT

I'M one of the "Oil Country Brotherhood," I'm an old-time pioneer;
I was one of the first—Oh, God, how I've cursed the oil-fields! but still I'm here.
I've sweated a-thirst in its summer heat; I've frozen and starved in its toil;
I've followed my dreams by its thousand streams, slaved and worked for its oil.

Look at my eyes, they've been burned twice; look, two fingers are gone;
And the gruesome scar on my left cheek is where the spudding shoe cleft the bone.
Each one a brand of this devilish land, where I've played and lost the game;
A broken wreck with a craze for "Booze" without a cent to my name.

This drilling is only a gamble, the worst is as bad as the best;
I was hooked up right and might have come out, right on top with the rest;
With Crawford, McGrew and McDonald—oh, God, but it's hell to think
Of the coin of the realm I've squandered, on cards and women and drink.

In the early days we were lonely, we hunted and just laid around,
And dreamed in our lonely shanty of the oil that lay under the ground.
We drank the mountain stilled whiskey, in the shade I've slept on the ground
Close to the bee tree in Wetzel, near where the best well was found.

Of the Parker days with their sin and their blaze, and the town all open wide!
(If God moulded me in his image, I've sure got the devil inside)
For we were plumb mad both the good and the bad, yet I swear it's the truth I tell—
There is no spot on earth in the same length of time, has hustled more souls to hell.

At Sistersville money was dirt, so easy to get and to spend.
I got stuck on a chambermaid, but she shook me in the end;
That made me a bum and for over a year I never drew sober breath,
'Till I found myself in a bug-house ward, with a lease that's bounded by death.

Thirty years in the oil-fields poring over its maps,
Sometimes eating à la carte, sometimes dining on scraps,
Bathed in the amber fluid, in the winter's fiendish cold—
Thirty years in the oil-field . . . thirty years . . . and I'm old!

Old and battered. No matter . . . there's booze in the bottle still.
I'll hitch up my span of trotters, drive them down to the 'ville.
Tonight I am fearfully lonesome . . . I'll just lay down on this bed . . .
I'll go down tomorrow . . . tomorrow . . . shoot the "Pea" this stack goes on the red.

. . . Come Bill, turn your wheel quick . . . my auto awaits in the court . . .
. . . I'll play you this stack of "Blue Ones," just to show you I'm a sport . . .
. . . How many tanks did she make, Bill . . . come on and play out the game . . .
. . . Dear God, up in heaven . . . What! you here, Kit? . . . Hallowed be thy name . . .

And this was the song of the derelict, as he lay in his shack alone,
With none to care for the still form there, the lips had ceased to moan;
In the flickering light—'tis a gruesome sight when God calls a wanderer home.

I'M A WISE GUY

YES, I'm the fellow that knows it all
About this glorious game of oil;
I sit in the lobby every day,
And you can bet on what I say.
I've followed it up since John was a lad,
And know his thoughts, good and bad;
Geology to me is like A, B, C.
All the newspaper dope comes out of me.
The big producers I know by name,
And the date when they began the game;
I know their records from A to Z,
I'm a wise old owl as you can see.
My only object's to help the "BOYS ALONG,"
And when I'm going good and strong
I boost their game, and it brings me luck;
My former job was driving a truck.
I know when the price is going up,
I have the instinct of a "highbrow pup"
Who noses the brush and flushes the game,
But I'm too danged modest to sign my name.

Randlet, Oklahoma, Aug. 16, 1912.

Dear Lawrence—

I am writing you this from a little rag shack,
Just to let the boys know that I have got back.
I met Doctor Booze in town that first night,
He shook his wise head, said, that lump is a sight,
You must heed my advice, he said with a grin,
For to go back to work with that lump is a sin—
I'll take it away without blood or pain
(Of course if you're careful it will sure grow again.
So I was persuaded and went into his game
When I think of it now I was surely insane)
For he started and peeled a strip at a stroke,
It was not very painful, 'twas the truth that he spoke,
'Till 'long about midnight the lump grew so small
I could have swallowed the smear, and not choked at all.
By morning, dear Lawrence, I knew it was all wrong,
For under his treatment I had become very strong.
Now the lump being removed, Doctor Booze had gone home,
And my head (mostly concrete) now felt like a bone—
And the things that passed by as if in review
Would go a long way toward filling a zoo.
And I learned now too late, how he lied when he said:
'Twould be bloodless and painless. (Great God, what a head!)
A week has gone by and I am back at my toil,
Twisting rotten old junk, a-boring for oil;
Yet I still see that table where the lump was reduced
And I still have the ache that the spirits produced;
But I'm glad I've got back to that derrick of steel,
To the screech of the pulleys, and the whirl of the wheel,
To the little rag house by the side of the tree;
It is a slavish old game but it's better for me
Than old Doctor Booze with his high-balls and fizzes
And the life that goes with it, loose gowns, and frizzes.

Now old R. E. Morse stands and peeks thro' the door
And smilingly asks, are you still feeling sore?
You have met him, dear Lawn, he's that ragged old bo,
That the next morning after says, "I told you so."
But I wish to say here, it was a loud jolly bunch,
Especially when soused in a foaming milk punch;
There was Dalton, Ted Smith, Hudson and Hivick,
Brice Kinney, Gartland, Summers and Heydrick.
Some class to that bunch when out in full force.
The end would be pleasant, but for that damned R. E. Morse,
Now should any one ask for me, say that I pass,
When corks are all popping, well, just turn down a glass.
For never again shall women and wine
Perform an operation on this form of mine.
When reading this letter just laugh, if you will;
I say it's my last,

Yours truly,

BILL.

THE TOOLEY

A POOR and worn out "Tooley" came to Heaven's gate,
Found drillers and producers crowding; sighed and said, "I'll wait."
For I have been a driller's servant, always poor and plain,
And should I crowd up boldly, I know 'twould be in vain.

"Come! Enter the jeweled portal," said Peter; "the prize is thine;
For you've shoveled the coal in the boiler and the steam you kept was fine;
No driller did you keep waiting, so enter here and now—
A crown of life eternal is waiting to press thy brow."

The Tooley stood and trembled and cried: "Peter, dear, not I,
For the man in front owned a hundred wells, I cannot pass him by!
Why, I never owned an auto, I did the commonplace things,
The best hand that I ever held was three aces and a pair of kings."

"Why, I scrubbed up the derrick floor; in the coldest room I slept;
I washed the driller's jacket; the towels were clean that I kept;
My bits have broken and battered, drilling the 'Big Injun sand';
I've lied like a heathen to the contractor, in this, a Christian land.
Why, I've stolen the farmer's chickens (I swear it's the truth I tell);
Hid their bones in the pumpings, cooked them in the exhaust at the well.

I'm old and battered and weary; warped and gray and bent;
I've received no chants of glory, the world's been good; I'm content."

"Arise!" cried the waiting Peter; "I give you eternal youth,
For you are the only Tooley that has come here and spoken the truth;
I place this crown on your forehead, place you where angels sing,
For if you stole the ROOSTER, you got only the backbone and wings."

MORAL: The driller and producers got the white meat.

TO CUSHING

A la Grantland Rice

WHETHER we think your day is past,
Whether we think you've gone to stay
Among the "has-been" gushers at last;
Whether we think you've had your day;
Although you'll never produce the oil,
You did in the days gone by,
You changed to the Prince the man of toil
Before they sucked you dry.

Whether your arteries are hardened and old
And have ceased response to the bit;
They have bled you well for your liquid gold
The bases were full when you hit.
You may come back with a flash once more,
Where veins have sharply turned,
Overlooked by the men who bore,
But the market you've scarred and burned.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE ROUSTABOUT

HE has plodded through the Beech-woods,
Through the snow of Bradford's hills;
He has hustled for his daily food
Across the frozen rills.
His load would shame the burro
That he carted o'er the lease;
There were callouses on his shoulders,
His clothes were covered with grease.
He had left his home in Parker
To see the gusher spout,
On great bleak hills of Bradford
And to be a roustabout.
The "Tie-path" was a long one
From Bradford to his home;
He had written twice for money,
With a promise ne'er to roam.
After supper in the evening
He would go and call his name
At the postoffice 'round the corner,
But the remittance never came.

We saw him next at Butler,
He was a Farm-Boss, so he said;
And the hat he wore at Rixford
Didn't begin to cover his head.
He took a position at Washington, —
A position, and not a job,
Where the boys all called him Mister,—
They were fired if they called him Bob.
Manager they called him at Mannington,
With a stenographer his thoughts to indite,
'Twas hard to hold hands with Robert
And stenograph what he wanted to write.

Things for Robert came quite easy,
Yet the woman that toiled all her life
Just sat at home with the children,
Satisfied as the manager's wife.

The interests he had, they were many,
Owned tools, and some people say
That he had a very large interest
In a lease, making five hundred per day.
But up in that office on Broadway
Where the Octopus lies coiled in his lair
Awaiting the reports of its servants,
This rumor impregnates the air.
It called for immediate action,
For John D. must own all the oil—
The *idea!* that one of his trusties
Should get just one lease from his toil;
He immediately wired Mister Robert
His production at once he must sell;
The reply "John" received was a corker—
The message read: "You go to H——l."

He had more to pack in his "Turkey"
Than when he left home on the rocks;
Then his suit case contained fifty-four pieces,
A deck of cards, and a pair of old socks.
But now it was bursting with clothing,
There were collars and cuffs and cravats,
A white vest and silk underwear plenty,
And one of "them" new-fangled silk hats.
The men all liked chesty Robert,
Since he had got over his pride,
And came from all points to bid him farewell—
There was one big-hearted fellow that cried.
As he stood on the rear end of the Pullman,
He waved his silk hat to the boys:
So long to you, friends and old comrades,
You'll hear from me soon from Ill'nois."

Lucky? Why everything Robert went into
Was just like old wheat in the mill,
And nature unburdened her secrets
To point out the right spot to drill.
He's as rich as the proverbial Crœsus,
And sits in a large roller chair,
At the top of a sky-scraping building,
Where he breathes altitudinous air.
In a "buzz wagon" he comes to his office,
Eats luncheon at twelve, dines at five;
He just loves the classic Grand Opera;
He's the greatest art critic alive.
They say he's educated and cultured,
An authority on poetry and art,
Reads Virgil's orations for pastime,
The Iliad he knows all by heart.
His taste for "sow-belly" has left him,
And Arbuckle's Jav he can't stand;
He craves dishes that sound "à la Creole,"
And must have the accompanying band.

OUR FLAG

BAPTIZED with shot and shell
And drenched in patriots' blood,
What stories she could tell
Of how for right she stood.
An emblem of the free,
We men of this proud state
Are part and parcel, you and me,
Of what has made her great.
Long may the handsome banner wave
Above our peaceful home,
And plant it o'er our lonely grave
When called to God's white throne.

THE TRUTH

IF you're waking kick me early, kick me early won't you, dear?
For you have punched my meal ticket all this bloomin' year.
It was a happy springtime the best I'd ever seen,
Until you cut the price of oil, and jarred me from my dream.

I'll give away my pumping wells, for my fortune's well nigh spent,
The banker holds the deed of trust, and I cannot pay my rent;
There'll never be a glad new year for Oklahoma oil,
For Mag and Mac and Standard Oil have robbed them of their toil.

They'll not renew the Osage lease, now mark well what I say,
No matter how the Brennans talk, or the Kellys, and Judge Shea;
The Osage cow is a farrow now, they've milked her clean and dry,
In nineteen sixteen, is twenty years, so let's let the old lease die.

THE LEASER'S ARGUMENT

A LEASER went to work one day;
A norther swept the moor;
He went his cheerful kindly way
To help a worthy poor.
He found the ranchman at his home
He grabbed his horny hand,
And said, I'm glad you are alone
For I want to lease your land.

You've made no crops, the leaser said,
You have nothing for your toil,
I'll drill a well, the leaser plead,
That will make you rich with oil.
No more you'll eat the sour dough
But pie and cake for your'n;
Your wife won't cut the wood, I know,
For you'll have gas to burn.

It's not a dream that soon will fade
The facts are cold as steel;
You'll cease to drive that Pinto jade,
You'll sit behind the wheel;
You'll leave the farm, and go to to town
With Mayme, and Jim, and Lee,
You'll have a cottage painted brown
If you'll lease your land to me.

What Happened

He grabbed that leaser by his clothes,
With one hand yanked his hair,
He smashed him on the face and nose,
And tore his clothes for fair;
He threw him on the frozen clay,
He kicked him where he sits,
The leaser dodged and got away,
For the farm wasn't worth "two-bits."

MORE PIPE LINES

SHOULD you ask the needs of Oil Men,
With their great and flush production
And the pipe lines goading, goading
Them to dire and swift destruction;
When the shylocks and the bankers
Show their ledger red from usage,
And their credit balance distant
From expense of their construction;
With the grocer, and the meat man,
Looking stern at other orders;
And the gasoline for last month
For the classic aut-to-mo-bile,
Not yet paid for at the garage,
Wifey wearing last year's bonnet;
This is not an idle sonnet,
It's the truth and I can prove it
By the needs of all the Oil Men.
What they need, if you should ask me,
It is pipe lines with large holes in,
It is stations with large pumps in,
And the market broad and worldly,
This is then the needs of Oil Men.

WHEN IT'S ALL OFF

DON'T bury me in a graveyard, when I have traveled west,
But bury me near an oil-field, the place that I've loved best;
An anvil for a pillow, and on it lay my head.
And seal my grave with paraffin when I am dead.

When it's all off, throw down a bellows for my bed,
And light the way with "yellow dogs" and set them at my head;
There where I've struggled 'long my happy way,
Where I'll feel the auger pounding; there I'll meet the day.

When it's all off, let me hear the derrick groan, as man alive;
Let the beam whine above me, and let the engine drive;
And when the tools are piled, and the cable's off and dried,
Let me lay where I can feel it all, when I have died.

IRISH MARY

DON'T know "Irish Mary"? You must be young in the trade,
For almost a half a century she's been called the "oil-country jade."
No door did she ever find open; no children played at her knee,
For she was a broken old derelict, on a turbulent human sea.

She curses, she rants in her frenzy—she swears she's as good as the best;
She "digs" with her gnarled fingers, a crucifix from the sunken old breast;
The children all run when they see her—young womanhood catches its breath;
My God, she was a horrible vision—stumbling on and on, until death.

They called her old "Irish Mary"—no one knew aught of her past;
She was one of the first in the new oil-fields — usually stayed 'till the last.
She drank the "speak-easy whiskey"—the roulette board was her bed
'Till the dive-keeper got over virtuous, then the cold ground she gets in its stead.

I remember the last time I saw her—it was a cold and a boisterous night;
The snow blew thro' cracks in the derrick, the wind was out in its might;
I heard a knock at the walk-side door, I heard it again and again;
The wind howled louder and louder, and the derrick groaned as in pain.

What's that? A woman's voice—like the wail of a soul in
despair!
I opened the door and there on the walk lay Mary with
disheveled hair.
We gently carried her into the light. The face was
wrinkled and old,
Swollen and beaten by the ice-flakes blue and tumid from
cold.

I chafed and rubbed her dirty hands—My God, 'twas a
gruesome sight,
The breath was foul with whiskey; a soul went to Hell
that night.
With the crucifix clasped in her fingers, she kissed it o'er
and o'er—
The features of "Irish Mary" are known in the oil-fields
no more.

THE GHOST OF BARNEY THOLOCO

I WAS sitting, sadly dreaming of my legal ship careening,
O'er court-house billows and their angry roar;
Through those big books still a-dreaming,
When I heard some one tapping—rapping at my office door.
" 'Tis the wind," I muttered faintly, "merely this and nothing more;
Just the wind and nothing more."

Back unto my volume turning, all my soul within me burning,
When again I heard the tapping—somewhat louder than before—
Surely, I am not mistaken, some one's rapping at my office door.
I must quell the throbbin' heart-beats and this mystery explore."
Went I then in fear and trembling, to this mystery explore.
Darkness there and nothing more.

Open then I flung the screen-door, with my heart all in a flutter,
In there stepped a stately Indian wrapped in blanket, as of yore;
Now we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blest with seeing Ghost of Barney at the door,
Standing there like sculptured marble, in the frameway of the door;
It was Barney, nothing more.

Deep into his black eyes peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Thinking thoughts no human being ever dared to think before;

But the silence was unbroken, and his features gave no token
Of the thoughts that were unspoken; I had seen that face before,
For it was the face of Barney, wandering from his nightly shore—
Barney Tholoco, nothing more.

"Tell me, Barney, tell me, why you left night's Plutonian shore?
For you're dead as all good Injuns, courts have said so long before.
A well was flowing on the Cimarron's winding shore."
Yet he stood there, all undaunted, as if he was a thing enchanted.
"Please go back to Stygian darkness, please go back, I thee implore."
And the redman's only answer—"Nevermore!"

Then he rose as if departing, "Ghost or Devil," I shrieked, up-starting,
"Get thee back into the tempest, and the night's Plutonian shore.
Leave my loneliness unbroken." Then he opened wide the door.
In there filed a thousand phantoms, Tommy Atkinses galore,
And the room was filled with Tommies from the window to the door—
Filled with Tommies to the door.

Why should I stand there and cavil—if they're sent by God or devil,
Whether from the dome inverted, or from the dark and Stygian shore,
I will take those phantom leases. Slipped I 'round and locked the door.

Then I asked how many Tommies, and they answered,
"We're a score."
The phantoms answered many more.

Turned I then to solemn Barney, elbows resting on his
knees,
Asked him of his many children, numerous as the
forest trees.
Then I wrote the leases quickly, fearing there'd be many
more;
Signed and sealed them in the office, witnessed by the
devil's spore.
Then I 'wakened, startled, frighted, at the creaking of
the door,
To find the bottle clean and empty—here's my prom-
ise—NEVERMORE.

TOMMY ATKINS

THE LAWYER'S MEAL TICKET AND THE GRAFTER'S HEAVEN

YOU have asked me for a story
Of traditions, myths and legends
That concern one Tommy Atkins.
There are many, many Atkins,
Each one darker than the other,
Black of heart and very crafty,
Each one claims he has no brothers.
Every oil man has a Tommy
Just as good as any other.

What about him do you ask me?
Listen now and I will tell you.
In the valley of the Cimarron,
In the verdant, silent valley,
Dwelt the forebear of this Tommy.
Veiled in mystery was this maiden,
No one knew aught of her husband,
No one knew aught of her Tommy,
Each of which she may have had one.
No one seems to care at this time.
When the golden flow was opened
Straightway came the men of wisdom,
Rich in ways and means so crafty,
Rich in years of oil production.
Thro' the records grim and musty
Hunted they for birth of Tommy;
Found his wonderous birth and being,
How he lived and died in suffering
Just before the golden harvest
Had he lived that he'd been heir to.
Now, across his quiet head-stone—
Head-stone without an inscription—

Are lawyers pleading, arguing wisely
That there is a real live Tommy,
That the grave of Tommy's vacant.
Others argue, just as wisely,
That there never was a Tommy,
That Tom's enrollment never happened,
While others look on with compassion,
Each of which has the real and only
Tommy Atkins of the Cimarron.

Why this quarrel for wasted vale-land
Go subdue your stubborn natures,
For Tommy Atkins is a myth.
Go allay your thirst and fevers—
If there was a real Tom Atkins
List the north winds they will tell you
That they'd dig him from the graveyard,
Take his bones and wire together
To exhibit in the court-house,
Just to show the phoney Tommies
That the only Tommy lived,
And we weary of your lawsuits,
Of your inharmonious discords,
And the north wind passing whispers.
All this land is the whole nation's—
Tommy Atkins is a myth.

Solomon and all Wisdom could not handle the questions that confront the courts of Oklahoma.

For

He had lived with Hebrews, where the best was like the worst;
His laws the Ten Commandments, he could always quench his thirst.
When the temple bells called Solomon to issue his decrees
He didn't have the lawyers, to swarm around like bees.
The problems that confronted him he solved them right off hand,

But out there in Jerusalem, they had no Atkins land.
So if Solomon had the questions that confront our district court
He would be a bum old piker and not the wise old sport.

THE OIL COUNTRY TOMMY ATKINS

(With apologies to Kipling)

I WENT into the court 'ouse to 'ear what I could 'ear—
The judge 'e up and sez to me, "What are ye doin' 'ere?"
The lawyers at the bar they laughed and giggled fit to die,
For they 'ad the ONLY Tommy—they 'ad no use for I.

O, they's a Tommy or they ain't a Tommy, so chase yourself away,
But they'll need this Tommy Atkins when the court is in full sway;
When the court is in full sway, me boys, when the court is in full sway,
For they IS a Tommy Atkins, both Page and Josey say.

Page and Josey ain't no 'eroes, they ain't no blackguards too,
They're just shrewd business oil men, just like me and you;
And sometimes if their conduct isn't all our fancy paints
Just remember all the oil men don't grow into plaster saints.

We need a Tommy Atkins, and we'll get one, never mind,
We'll need 'im on the witness stand, when there's trouble in the wind,
When there's trouble in the wind me boys, when there's trouble in the wind,
Just any old black nigger, for our courts are always blind.

We leased the land from Tommy's ma, while Tommy was asleep,
We've got our papers signed by her, 'twas a shame they were so cheap;
We knew that Tommy was a myth, his mother was a joke;
We took our chance with justice and we'll law them 'till they're broke.

For with Tommy here and Tommy there, and Tommy just outside,
But it's fine hotels for Tommy when the suit is on inside;
When the suit is on inside, me boys, and the lawyers always rave,
We will have a Tommy Atkins, if we dig 'im from the grave.

Tommy Atkins' mother must of had triplets galore,
Each time of her confinement she must have had a score;
For they are finding Tommy Atkinses in every wood and dell,
And the grafting shyster lawyers make the devil smile in hell.

For Tommy Atkins' father must have been a prolific soul,
When first oil was discovered how the Tommys in did roll,
How the Tommys in did roll, me boys, a hundred in a day,
For there's a thousand Tommy Atkinses, so Page and Josey say.

ALAS! POOR PADEN—WE KNEW HER DISPOSITION

ALAS! poor Paden, we knew her well (Oil Well)
She "busted" the market and simply raised H——l.
Well, we waited and watched, admired their gall,
Of boosting a gusher, when they'd nothing a-tall—
We groaned at expense, that the wise ones were laden,
With geology, biology, criminology at Paden.

How they delved in that mystery, that little dark hole,
How the wires rang out, as they perjured their soul;
But before they drilled in, they wired New York
For the guys with the high-brows, that will grow into pork,
And they all came down to see this mystery explored,
And see their wealth trickling down the hole that they bored;
For they were as ignorant as a sweet country maiden,
But paragorically speaking they got wisdom at Paden.

They'll rush back to New York with a wail and a whine,
And get out their axes, cut the price a thin dime,
For tips to the porters, livery, auto and sich
Hurts a "high-brow" like blazes, even if rich.
To their grandsons they'll tell in monkey-like chatter
How the great Paden well was drilled into water,
And how this dear child with gold would be laden,
Had they NOT played geology down there at Paden.

AFTERWORD

All the science and faith in this world or the world to come will not make a gusher out of a *Sixty Barrel Well.* Geology may have found Calamites cannæformis, or they may have found some skulls Dinotherium giganteum or some Chamfered and imbricated scales, but none of these seemed to have the Oleaginous matter in sufficient quantities to spontaneously gush forth the flow of gold anticipated, aye, even commanded by the pampered sons of Broadway. If they insisted on seeing oil flow I would suggest that they shoot a 42-inch centimeter shell through fifty-five thousand barrel tanks. That would have been better sport than shooting a "Dago" camp in Colorado.

THE OIL COUNTRY VAMPIRE

A FOOL there was and he drilled a hole.
Even as you and I.
He selected the spot and bet his roll,
He sold the stock and perjured his soul,
Even as you and I.

'Twas a judgment test and he used his best,
As he sat at eventide,
And dreamed a dream of a feathered nest,
The comfort he'd have in the years of rest,
But he found his "Dream-child" lied.

A fool there was and he gave his note,
Even as you and I.
For stock in a "Wild-cat well," he wrote—
The dividends did not seem so remote—
He felt very much like a bonded "Bloat,"
Even as you and I.

Oh! the cents we lose, and the sense we lose
Figuring dividends with pride.
In castles of air, we had builded there
In vision of beauty with never a care,
Yet we were not satisfied.

The fool went broke to his last red cent,
Even as you and I.
The well was dry and the money was spent.
Nobody cared where the plunger went;
Yet he gave tongue to a loud lament,
Even as you and I.

He cared not for loss, for money is dross.
The reason that poor fool cried,
It was when he had known, he was scraped to the bone,
That he was thrown on the world alone,
'Twas failure that hurt his pride.

THAT ANALYZING OIL EDITOR

DOWN around Muskogee they lead the simple life,
But their popular Oil Editor is always seeking strife;
His feet are awful tender, has the wisdom of the owl,
And he uses dum-dum bullets which all experts say are foul.

He kin take a little oil dope, not over two lines long,
And make a column story when he is going strong;
He can write about the storage with all its downs and ups;
He can tell the date exactly when the bull-wheel-dog had pups.

He kin tell each blooming error in the Prairie's garbled table,
And is the only honest interpreter of the Pipe Line and its fable;
He kin punctuate the Pipe Line Runs, and tell 'em right off hand;
He knows the favorable comments as the ranchman knows his brand.

He criticizes ignorance, among our great and small,
He's a serious minded "pusson" with his belly full of gall.
The Editor of the Phoenix should advance Patricka Moore,
For he's slaughtered all the dopesters, loves to wade around in gore.

EAST OR WEST IT IS THE SAME OLD THING

IT is the same old farmer, in the same old place,
The same old whiskers on the same old face;
The same old woman and the same old wail,
The same old piker and his same old tale;
The same old story with the same twinkling eye,
To perforate the acres tho' they all are dry.
The same livery horses, the same old rig,
The same old buggy top is on the same "old pig";
The same old girl, the same dainty feet,
The same old hominy and the same dirty sheet;
The same old office where you hear the same old lies;
The same old prunes, and the same old pies,
The same old dining-room, the same broken chair,
The same old side meat, with the same teat and hair.
It is the same old story when you want to pay your fees,
We never make a charge, you can pay what you please.
The same old landlady, the same daughter sweet,
The same favorite boarder makes your misery complete.
The same lavatory, the same dinner bell,
The same old boarders, wish for the same old hell;
The same old rain, the same old slime,
The same old railroad, four hours behind time;
The same old skinner, with the same old smile,
With the same evil thought in the same old style;
Will the same old heaven be the same sweet place,
For the same weary leaser, with the same smiling face,
Or the same old hell with its same old fire,
Fry the wronged piker because he's such a liar?

But if we get up yonder where the streets are paved with gold,
Will we have to listen to stories so often told?
"Me and my old woman have worked so hard and long,
For this farm of forty acres, now lease it for a song?
If so, O, Good Lord, spare us from the anguish and the pain,
And send us down to Hades to forever there remain.

THE OLD MAN'S LAMENT

THEY'VE moved the Postoffice, William,
From the little shack on B—
Moved it from that tumbled-in building,
Where it's been since seventy-three;
Another "land-mark" gone, William,
A mile-stone passed in a stride,
Installed in that pressed brick building
That St. Albans points to with pride.
Yes, they've moved the Postoffice, William,
Have furnished it new and complete
With gas and electricity lighted,
And warmed by that new-fangled heat;
Why, Bill, they have six hundred boxes,
And it is finished in quarter-sawed oak;
We may be old and back numbers,
But that finery all looks like a joke.
Mail passed thro' windows of gold, William,
Wouldn't be any sweeter to you
Than mail you received from the broken down door,
From the sweetheart that loved you so true.
They are setting the pace pretty fast, Bill,
They'll carry you and me off our feet;
Why, store keepers growl when you spit on the floor,
The next thing they'll be paving our street.
We have seen many changes, friend William,
From the rumbling old hack to the trains;
From the curb money broker to banker,
But our old-fashioned Postmistress remains.
The spring of youth's been discovered,
Years and years she has handled the mails;
Generations unborn will get mail from her hand,
For eternal youth never fails.
They say, Bill, in this new office
That once a week they're going to sweep;

A sign will be over the door-way,
Gentlemen will please clean their feet;
If they get so "blooming persnickety,
I'll go to Washington and see
If we can't move it back to B street
As it was in seventy-three.
Yes, they've moved the Postoffice, William,
From the little shack down on B;
We'll have to get used to the modern ways,
We've just got to do it, you and me.
They are not satisfied as yet, William,
With the Postoffice, new and bright,
They object to our dear old Postmistress
Because of her failing sight.
They slipped away to the capital, Bill,
To play their political game,
Adopting the gumshoe methods,
Be it said of them to their shame.
For thirty-eight years, more or less, Bill,
Her books have been kept clean and white,
From a few business letters and missives
To mail by carloads each night.
To her trust she has always been true, Bill,
Of the Inspector she had no fears,
I've complained at the service and growled, Friend,
But I apologize tonight, Bill, with tears.
Thousands upon thousands she's handled, Bill,
With never a blot on her name;
She deserves something better, friend William,
Than used, and thrown aside, like a cane.
I have just had a talk with her, William,
And on her old cheek you could trace
The signs of grief, and displeasure,
Chiseled deep in her old wrinkled face.
I feel very badly tonight, William,
That ingratitude at our capital holds sway;
The motto, "Honor to Whom it is Due," William,
Stands deserted, along the highway.

O YOU KITTY!

O KITTY, you're a darling—
You're a sweet-faced Indian Queen.
There must have been a starling
To whisper in your dream
That "Midco" and Fred Aiken
Had large bundles of the green,
And you could do the raking
To crown you, Kate, with sheen.

A bonus, dear Miss Fixico,
Of fifty thousand stones
From Aiken and the Midco
Must have scraped them to the bones.
You could buy a good young man with that,
A white one, Red or Creek,
And if you won't mind one that's fat,
For myself I hope to speak.

If you'll turn to me what's in your name,
I'll furnish the checks all right;
I'll show you how to spend the same
Like a Christian and a knight.
You're just a simple-minded girl,
Haven't touched life's cup of gall,
I care not if your hair don't curl,
I'll help you spend it all.

THE LAW OF THE OIL-FIELD

Suggested by the fire at Tulsa, Okla., where five men met their death July 24, 1913. Lighting a match was the cause.

THIS is the law of the Oil-Field, and ever it must be plain,
She must kill the match-lighting smoker, the cigarette-smoking insane;
Her lives are valued by loved ones, her men are as good as the best;
She has nurtured them all on her bosom, has lulled them oft to their rest.
When her hidden treasures are punctured, and she gushes forth in her might,
And you see the guy rolling his "pimp-stick," feeling his clothes for a light—
Just grab up the "Porgie-jack-lever" and smash him over the head—
Drive home the "rig-builders-hatchet," be sure that this fool is dead;
Drown him like a rat in the river, starve him like the spawn of the plains—
Leave him to rot near his folly, poisoned and hollow his veins.
This is the law of the toiler, the ones that have ever been first,
To lay cooling hands on those injured, by the match-lighting ninny accursed;
This is the law of the lowly, the millionaire man and their spawn
For the ones who carry the tinders, death must be sure and swift as the dawn.
This is the law of the Oil-Field—that before you may raise the latch,
You must learn that more lives and property are destroyed each year by the match;

Handsome ones, burned crisp and distorted, eyes staring, red and aglare,
These branded men, they confront you, these are the facts that's laid bare.

(With apologies to Robert W. Service.)

THE CRY OF THE TAME

I WANT to get away from the city,
Where squalor is seen every day,
I want to go out in the wildwood,
In highways and byways in May;
Away from the cursed vile city,
Away from its rumble and roar,
Out to the hills, grand and silent,
Where the lark and eagle soar.
Somehow the city seems lonely,
True, I am old and I'm slow,
But the city's wild cry is pathetic,
It hurts me and I just have to go.

Let me get away from eyes staring,
Away from the faces so grim;
Let me pluck beautiful flowers
Away from the tumult and sin.
Let me get away from sky scrapers,
The ones that are builded by man,
Lead me to the sky piercing mountains
Builded by God's own plan.
There let me breathe their fragrance,
Let me list to their purring streams,
Let me grow wild like the flowers
In this, the land of my dreams.

THE FARMER'S SAND

DID a dry one come in out at Burk, Louie?
My word, what a cruel blow!
Why, we worked like blooming Turks, Louie,
To make that Roberts well flow.
Dost think thou art deep enough, Louie?
Let me hold your little white hand,
We knoweth ours is big and rough, Louie,
But 'twill brace you to the farmer's sand.

That is the sand you know, Louie,
That never before's been explored;
It is one with the rainbow glow, Louie,
Its innards have never been bored;
It's a sand that lies deep in the earth, Louie,
A sand that to some is a dream.
We have tried to find it since birth, Louie,
To unseal it and take out its cream.

Some fellow will do it some time, Louie,
When done it'll be an awful deep well;
It will take a long drilling line, Louie,
For it will be China, oil, gas, or hell.
You don't know where it is found, Louie?
Now listen and I'll give you light,
It is ten thousand feet under ground, Louie,
Now, Louie, don't drop dead from fright.

If you'd drill 'till you punctured Nick's soul, Louie,
And your bank book was painted in red,
You'd be taking the farmer's toll, Louie,
It would not be deep enough, so he said.
Remember that only wells that have oil, Louie,
Will satisfy the owners of land;
Then you'll receive kind words for your toil, Louie,
But don't try for the old farmer's sand.

REMINISCENT

WHEN you were a Tooley and I was the same
Back in the Bradford day—
We'd no auto to ride the mountain side
And the contractor had his say;
We hammered the bit, 'till we threw a fit,
While the steel grew cold and blue,
With our sweaty face, 'twas a driving race,
And our thoughts, tho' crude, were true.

Careless we slaved, and careless we played,
And reckless at last we came;
To the rainbow's glow and life's big show
In the blaze and the flare of fame;
How they smirked and smiled, as wealth we piled,
We were gods of a Mammon age;
We were in the spell of wealth to dwell,
And we talked like a slobbering sage.

Now comes the thought, what price we bought
The pleasure, and tinsel, and fraud;
Have we played a square game in winning our fame,
Are we still the noble works of God?
Or has grasping for gold shriveled our soul
And blighted a life free from care?
Now what would we give, to go back there and live
Where wild flowers scent the pure air?

Where birds sound a warning of the sunburst of morning,
That blends with the beam's plaintive whine,
And the whispering breeze converse with the trees,
And pure mountain water our wine;
Then our bits cut the ditch, now we are rich,
With all that riches can buy.
Have we counted the cost in what we have lost?
Then why for the old life do we sigh?

EDWIN L. DRAKE

The Dreamer

THOU, the dreamer, hast builded cities where silence reigned supreme;
Thy vision was within the soul—and peered behind the future screen.
Amid pastoral scenes where sang the lark, thy sobs and tears came from a broken heart,
And blended with the sneers and jeers of little men whose views were swart.
Through unknown ages the voice of destiny called to thee from out the vast,
To hew the way, to blaze the trail through unknown rocks, the cloth of courage at thy mast.
Since thou hast pioneered the way—the jagged spires of wood and steel pierce the new world's sky;
The pregnant earth yields wealth—but not for thee; her golden fluid is but thy dream's reply.
Homes of wealth and luster are set upon the land that thou hast found,
Through hurts and chills and hungry cries within thyself, no kindly one to sooth the wound;
Three score and two years have past. A thoughtless public is roused to honor now thy name,
In brick and stone and flaming torch—a marble bust in the hall of fame.
Gold pours from corners of the earth that gave thee name and gave thee birth,
In honor of thy glorious deeds to us poor mortals of this earth.
A public benefactor thou! Thy genius is God's greatest gift;
It pulses through the touring car and splits the fleecy clouds adrift.
Oh! wondrous mind! What highways open up their scenes to thee!

EDWIN L. DRAKE

Centuries unborn will rise and praise the conquerors of
the air and sea;
Walls may crumble, empires fall, islands will rise from
out the sea;
But the dreamer's work goes on and on and blends with
all eternity.
To thee, Edwin Drake, and your pioneer soul, that's why
we honor thee now—
Thou hast made the world richer with happier homes; to
a world's benefactor we bow.

TELL THEM AGAIN TO ME

COME, tell me a tale of pioneer days,
Of the early days in oil,
Of Colonel Drake and Dan O'Day
And the fighting of old George Coil;
Tell us of days on the old Tarr farm,
Of the boarding house up on the hill—
Where coffee was handed to you lukewarm
And the beans were cooked with skill.
Tell me of days when John D. R.
Had hair on his old bald pate;
When Henry M. didn't own the car
That he used to travel in state.
Tell us of days of five dollar oil
The day when Cal Payne pulled the tongs,
When Archibald rested in peace from his toil
And his life was one sweet song.
Tell us of days when Cap Grace was a kid,
Great heaven, that's too ancient, I fear;
For that dates back before John and his lid
Covered all the good leases that's here.
Tell us of days of the Parker Exchange,
Gee! What an unappropriate name!

For entering there you came without change
As you bet on the other man's game.
Tell of Ben Hogan when he was afloat
Before he was converted and reborn,
Of the living pictures he kept on the boat,
With music and mirth until morn.
Tell us of days when the Tooley was boss,
When Yonkins "thumbed" carefully the clamps,
And of days when Morgue Davis never was cross,
And the producers were men and not tramps.
Tell us of days when Ed Jennings was free,
But he was never known to be that,
Except when he paid the alderman his fee—
At that so I've read he stands pat.
Tell us of days of Bradford's deep snows,
When John Eton drummed his own trade,
And told to the buyer a tale of his woes,
And his clothes were not tailor made.

Tell them again, those pioneer days,
How those giants dragged wealth from their toil;
Of the Arbuckle Jav, the beans and the maize
They were fed on while boring for oil.
We never grow weary of the old, old tales
Of the trials of that bold pioneer
Who 'mid snow and ice and his own dinner pail
Gave the comforts of home with its cheer.
To the old pioneer we offer this toast:
May your declining old days be serene;
You've suffered on earth many a roast,
When dead may your grave be kept green.

GENIUS

I BEGAN with the creation, for I am the creator;
Years unborn will feel my magic touch;
Stones will be reared to my dedication
For my vassals are the years.
No race, clime or condition claim me as their own,
The scullion's cabin, or marble halls my home;
I put the miracle solution in the brain of man,
To stab the heavens with a comb of spires.
The walls of empires crumble and fall. A tidal wave
Sweeps from the sea, and undermines the rock,
But I go on forever. The millions slave.

I drag from mother earth her richest treasures
And weave her jewels in a crown for man;
The spring of eternal youth is but a step,
When the wizard's brain receives the ban.
Aye, the devil's work comes from my storehouse,
The steel clad leviathans, the shot, the shell,
The Nation's weapons but the warriors' hell.
The trackless forests, the unchartered sea
Are the printed pages of a book to me,
For I'm the maker of charts, and blaze the way.
The sprocket wheel, belts of steel, the whirling wheel
Are the fabrics woven by my hand.

LAMENT TO BACCHUS

O BACCHUS, God of Rum and Mail Pouch,
My poor deluded Bacchus, would that I had drank
The spirits for you. Rather had I smoked the pipe
That gave me visions of gnomes and fairies.
It is but true that fairies are not habitats of this earth;
Neither is the "Peach Limb" or the magnetic needle
Used to find the precious fluid that mother earth
Has hidden so carefully, for the ages past.
You have been a good old sport, and wise as Solomon, but
Alas! alas! you must remember the fate of the false
Prophets of old. How sorry I am to tell you, that the
Nutty houses are full of erring Oil Smellers;
And the experts shake their heads and mournfully say,
What a sad case, incurable and pitiful.
Remember, O Bacchus, there is only a step between
Experting the geological formation and "damn-foolishness."
It is better, Bacchus, that you spend your time riding
Through the mesquite and cactus, with the hot winds of Texas
Fanning or burning your hardened cheek, than to spend
Your time in trying to convince an unregenerate Oil Man
Who seems to be hopelessly SANE.

* Dedicated to well known oil man of similar name, a reported firm believer in the witch-hazel rod.

FAREWELL, DOCTOR BOOZE

WE have all done well; we put you in a palace fit for a King; you were placed in the Hall of Fame in St. Louis—or was it the Hall of Infame—your name there was Adolphus Busch. We drank so much that we made your makers work at night at Peoria. Your pathway is strewn with broken wrecks and human derelicts; your meat and drink are the souls of men and the tears of women; you have been soul destroying, and you have put the key of all destruction in your name, and now when you have been routed from your last trench, and your breast has been torn open, we dedicate this little verse to you, O Fallen King:

You have been on the shelf, distinctly yourself,
In containers that would fool the best eye;
Sometimes on your back, you were called apple-jack,
On others you looked like hair dye.

They have brought you to town in a jug that was brown,
They have hauled you around in a hearse;
You've been shipped very often, in a rough-box and coffin,
And you've grabbed every cent in our purse.

From your very beginning, you've been chock full of sinning;
You've joined hands with the loose fitting gowns;
And eyes that were dearest, you've made them the blearest,
Yet, you were handled real kindly in towns.

But now, Uncle Sam, who is somewhat a man
When he goes into training to fight;
Says now it's my joy to take care of the boy,
And see that he stays home at night.

So he says to the distiller, you're a mighty good feller,
Like the bed-bug you live a mean way;
And the farmer's good wheat is for my people to eat,
That will build and not take strength away.

So now, Doctor Booze, we'll bid you adieus,
O'er your grave a tablet will say:
"I have broken up homes, 'mid desolate moans,
It was hell, but I sure had my day.

I've enjoyed the great mirth of poisoning the earth;
How I grin when the little ones cry!
How I've gutted each life, bathed in tears of the wife,
And I grin as I wave you good-bye."

TEXAS

IT'S a great big land 'way out yonder,
With a sky of azure blue;
Where the soft big moon is smiling
On the sparkling drops of dew.
Where roses bloom forever,
And the wine-cups nod to the sun;
Some say that God has cursed it,
Others love its broad fields—
And I'm one.

I've mucked and slaved in the North-land,
I've frozen and toiled in the West.
I've followed my dreams in the East-land,
But I love your broad fields the best.
With your great big fields full of silence—
Some say, 'tis a good land to shun;
While others they coo to and pet it,
And love its broad fields,
And I'm one.

Mountains? Yes, there's mountains out yonder,
Mountains that tower so high,
That the men there will bet their last shekel
That the clouds have to sidetrack to get by.
Deserts? Well, I should say so,
With mirages reflecting the sun.
There are some that never would trade it
For another land—
And I'm one.

It's a land that no weakling can live in,
Unless there's red blood in his veins;
Your past is forgiven, forgotten,
If you'll hold the plow, or the reins;
At first, you will hate it like blazes,
You'll curse your fool self 'cause you've come,
But soon you'll be like all others
And swear its the best land—
'Neath the sun.

Love it? Well, I should say so,
Because all your past is forgot;
The castles you've built in dream-land
Have grown to be real on the spot.
Building your share of an empire,
Rearing her walls stone by stone,
In her spell, she grips and she holds you,
God gave you this land for your own.

REQUIEM TO THE POWER THAT WAS

THERE is crepe on the door of Congress,
Some hearts are as heavy as lead,
The talons that have throttled progress
Have been clipped, and the King is dead.
"The King is dead, long live the King!"
On the Ides of March he was slain;
The "Cannon" was spiked by the insurgent wing
And they're waiting the funeral train.

If I was a mourner at Joseph's bier,
I would take my stand at his head,
Where I would be safe to shed a tear
With the assurance that he was dead.
With his dying kick he may vex us,
It is safer at the old mule's head.
A smash in the insurgent solar plexus
May stand what you've gained on its head.

"So play the fife lowly, beat the drum slowly,"
Be sure the coffin-lid's screwed down tight;
This song we will sing, it won't be unholy,
There will be a "Hot time somewhere tonight."
Satan awaits you, with hand out to greet you,
Say, come, my old friend, I've waited you long.
The light you will see will look rather blue,
And the Imps will all join in the song.

THE INVESTIGATING SPIRIT OF OUR CONGRESS

Scripture: "The same yesterday, today and forever."

WE'VE called our dummy Congress to investigate our beef,
We have asked investigation on the ocean's rocky reef;
We have asked investigation on the trust that makes the pins,
We will ask investigation to the family having twins.

We've investigated cattle, we've investigated fields,
We've investigated cotton crops to see how much it yields;
We're investigating houses, we're investigating rents,
We're investigating dollars, we're investigating cents.
We're investigating forests, we're investigating plants,
We're investigating underwear, we're investigating pants;
We're investigating boozerine, we're investigating beer,
We're investigating grouchiness, we're investigating cheer.
We're investigating farmers, we're investigating soil,
We're investigating pipe lines, we're investigating oil;
We're investigating bankers to see why they are rich,
But we haven't investigated the man that's in the ditch.
We've investigated pulpits, we'll investigate the press,
But we've not investigated the man that's in distress;
We're investigating sober men, we're investigating drunks
We're investigating satchels, we're investigating trunks;
When we get thro' investigating the folks will all be broke,
So stop it now, for heaven's sake, your actions are a joke.

THANKSGIVING THOUGHT

LET me be thankful for the sunny day,
Or in the evening glow, or when I hear
Your footsteps passing on the way,
Or your dear voice in trembling near,
I find in it my hope, without despair,
And every absent moment know the need
Of that bright star that draws me to the lair
Of happiness in happy greed.
Let me remember all your love in life,
The fragrance of the rose as wafted by,
The smile of welcome from the wife,
The laugh of children ringing high;
The song that's whispered thro' the trees—
I'm thankful, Lord, for all of these.

MY FLAG

YOU give me my life and my liberty,
You wave o'er the land of the free,
You've always been right, conserving your might,
And now it is checked up to me.

I love every star in your make-up,
My father's blood dyed your stripes red;
And the white as I know is purer than snow,
You've not waved o'er tyranny's head.

You have called me to fight for your standard
Of morality, virtue and peace.
It seems to me right to go into this fight
And stay until slavery shall cease.

I will fight for you now, my old glory,
And I'll not fight like a paid Prussian slave.
The enemy I'll claw, right into his maw,
And I will follow you into the grave.

I care not where you will lead me,
On England's, or France's sacred soil,
Or Turkey or Russia, Austria or Prussia,
For it's liberty and you that I moil.

For you I will fight to the finish,
For you, death is terrorless to me;
When the day's work is done and the victories won,
I will bring you unstained 'cross the sea.

JUST TIRED

I AM going to leave it all—
The friend and the foe alike;
I have smashed the old "dinner pail"
Under my heel on the pike.
I am leaving the hemlock cities,
Leaving old pals of my toil.
Great heavens, how I've loved it
From rousting to boring for oil!

Years I have toiled in your mire,
Years I stood 'neath your beams,
Delving at night by the flickering light
For the "oil paying" sand of my dreams.
Stood on the derrick's cold top
When it staggered like a drunk from the strain
Of the storm that twisted its girts
And she whined like a puppy in pain.

Stood there and tied the frozen line
By the gleam of the lightning's flash,
When no voice could be heard from below,
No sound save the thunder's loud crash.
Stood at the brake in the cold,
Stood by you, in sadness and mirth,
Drank from the pail the bitter black Jav
But I couldn't drag wealth from your earth.

My hair has grown gray in your harness,
How I love you God only can tell;
I am leaving you now, and forever
Trying to get away from your spell
That has twisted and bent my manhood—
(God! how I've worked and perspired!)
I'm not quitting because I'm not game,
But because I've worked hard and I'm tired.

HIS OIL COUNTRY SHACK

HIS shack is as it used to be
Before he was called away;
The wall is covered o'er with maps
He marked from day to day.
The pictures of himself and pals
Are in their favored spot,
A picture of some laughing girls,
No thought of shell and shot.

His baseball "mitt" is on the stand,
His boxing gloves there too,
That felt the pressure of his hand
In happy days of youth;
It was the room he long had kept,
When he was just a scout,
With pleasant dreams while he had slept
But his country called him out.

A picture of his mother there,
With the smile his mother wore,
And all the things that he held dear
Are treasured as of yore.
Into the room this soldier goes
To bid his last farewell;
His dreams are past, and well he knows
He must face the shot and shell.

He looks around the little shack,
While tears bedim his eyes,
And wonders if he will come back
To Tulsa's azure skies.
His mother's picture seems to say,
Go, do your duty well,
I'll watch you tho' I'm far away
When you face the warrior's Hell.

"DER TAG"

It Is Here

YOU have had your foolish fancies,
In the visions saw it come;
You have reared your sons to slaughter,
Now they answer to the drum;
You have toasted it, you have boasted it
When your eyes were seeing red,
You have trained the men to brain men
And your fields are strewn with dead.

You're embracing it, you're facing it,
Your land is drenched with blood,
There's no shaming it, no damning it,
It's carrying you on its flood.
You have thought of it, you have fought for it,
Made guns with flaming shell;
You have sighed for it, you've lied for it,
Now you've got its belching hell.

Are you satisfied, now it's ratified?
What do mothers say
Who kneel at night (for boys who fight)
With streaming eyes to pray?
Is it the happy day with its hellish pay
That lays boys 'neath the sod?
When the bugle blows o'er crimson snows,
How will you meet your God?

Author's Note—The German officers of the Army and Navy have had a toast "Der Tag," "The Day" for many years. It is here, November 1, 1914.

THE DEVIL'S SOLILOQUY ON THE KAISER

I THOUGHT I knew some tortures,
To blast the human soul;
The heart aflame, transparent breast,
Has made them all recoil.
The red hot vat of molten lead,
The pitchfork held aloft
To pierce the eyeballs of the damned;
But this method all is soft.
Why, Bill, you take the babies,
The wives and sweethearts dear,
And mutilate and rape them
And you drink their crystal tear;
You pierce the tear-stained eyeballs,
You mutilate the breast
Of babes and virgin mothers.
At your methods, Bill, I rest.
You poison France's ozone
With a gas more dread than mine;
Your imps are found on every shore
Like reptiles from the slime;
You've made me sick at heart, Bill,
My domain I will sell;
So take it, Bill, in welcome,
For I'm ashamed to run my hell.

This was posted in France during the war by some of the boys in Major George Clulow's Sanitary Corps.

1909

WHILE strolling along the highway
On a crisp December morn,
The trees looked bleak and naked,
The earth seemed dead and worn;
I met an ancient being
Wending slowly down the way;
The face was bearded, wrinkled,
The head was bald and gray.

I accosted him quite cheerily,
Whither goest thou old man?
The wind is cold for one so old,
Have you no kith or clan?
Is there none at home to love you,
No children to love and care?
Nowhere a wife to cherish your life,
Is there not someone, somewhere?

You know me well, young man, quoth he—
I once was in my prime;
You herald with glee my birth, said he,
For I'm the year nineteen hundred nine.
You will soon welcome nineteen ten,
And will place to his lips the wine
Of hope and joy, to the restless boy,
And forget nineteen hundred nine.

I have come to the end; but a month remains,
Just one page of the twelve to write;
The good, the bad, the pain, the joy,
And then I will say good night.
Have you kept your pages clean and white,
Or are they spotted and blotted with tears?
Is it an open book where all can look,
Can you review with pride the years?

For this old world I've done my best,
No joy did I carelessly blight;
So leave me alone, my trouble's soon done—
To the young and the old, good night.

TO 1914

HURRY up and get you gone,
You're the worst we ever saw;
Strikes and wars, since early dawn
Clawing, tearing at our maw;
What you've done in your short life
Can't be equalled by any years,
With your horrors, blood and strife,
Orphans made and widows' tears.

Nineteen fourteen, you've been bad,
Torn our homes by wrecks and wars;
Now you're leaving we are glad,
For we've had enough of Mars.
Maybe you're not all to blame
For the cruelty of your days,
Mayhap the rulers are insane
That drive to death the willing slaves.

When behind time's veil you've passed,
Immersed in blood, in passion rolled,
We'll feel your sting while the world shall last—
That's why we laugh as you grow old.
My God! Old Year, what a mad carouse,
Wasting hours in vain dispute,
The harlot war has been your spouse,
No year has borne such bitter fruit.

You've only got a few days more
To redden pages that once were white;
The peaceful happy smile you wore
Soon was stricken by frenzied blight;

And yet you smirked and smiled in glee,
Before the spot-light of life's stage,
And crooned your song in ecstasy,
Which turned too soon to awful rage.

With all your crimes and licensed lust,
Your scattering whirlwind, fire and sword,
That fills the cup with crumbled dust
Of that well meaning, restless horde;
We cannot blame it all on you,
For vision's greed is 'filled desire;
You gave some happiness, it is true,
To others hell—like a soul on fire.

THE WAIL OF THE FAT MAN

I'D like to be a slender man
And wear a starched cravat;
I'd like to look real spick and span,
But gee! I can't, for I'm too fat.

I'd like to look real slick and clean,
With starched-up collar and all o' that,
But when I do I feel so mean
It's like a poultice, I'm so fat.

I'd like the girls to say he's cute,
When on the street with sailor hat,
But they just turn their dainty snoot,
I'm so damned hot, I am so fat.

I want a club when on the street,
A policeman's mace or baseball bat,
To kill all idiots that I meet,
Who says, "Ain't it fierce for one so fat?"

GIVE AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE

THE picture gives richness for years and for years,
Yet forever its beauty will shine;
It pleases the eyes, tho' it fills them with tears,
But 'tis never affected by time.

The rose sheds its fragrance to the breezes all day.
The flower it can never despoil,
'Till the hand of ripe age picks its petals away,
And they drop, giving life to the soil.

The rough marble yields to the sculptor's hard steel
While he creates a child of his brain;
It fills the dull room, in a sweet mute appeal,
But for years and for years 'twill remain.

The heart of the man is no less divine
Than the picture, the statue or rose.
Each give of their beauty, and thro' ages shine,
So give—take your pay—in repose.

TO JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY ON RECEIVING THE DEGREE OF LL. D.

HOW are you, Doctor Riley?
I trust you're well, today;
Them Hoosier College fellers
Have added to your name they say;
It's gwine to be middlin' hard on us,
But God knows it ain't a sin
To have to call you, Doctor,
'Stead of just plain Jim.

But say, old pal, they jist can't help
Givin' you honorable degrees,
And if the boys that knew you
Could distribute them LL. D.'s

They would take their golden nuggets
As they yank 'em from the shock,
And pawn them with their jewelry,
Put their household goods in hock,
To pay the earthly tribute
To a character so fine,
Who wrote in loving memory—
"That Old Sweetheart of Mine."

But if they place the alphabet
At the end of that ole name,
And each and every letter
Comprised a wreath of fame—
We know that that would be too small,
And not a soul would mock
At the pen that wrote that glowing verse—
"When the Fodder's in the Shock."

Jist following the good old Scriptures
By conferring laurels on you,
For in that good old book of ours
It says, "Honor to whom honor is due."
So we uncover our heads to you
Because of your lofty soul,
And love you for remembering your youth
When you wrote "The Swimmin' Hole."

In talking it over the other night,
We thought it powerful kind
That they show their appreciation
Before you leave this world behind.
America has had never an equal
To you, James, in rhythmic art
In that inimitable style of yours,
You get into nature's heart.
The Hoosier poet has earned his fame,
But before he's laid on the shelf,
We hope for more like that pathetic verse,
"Good bye, Jim, Take Keer of Yourself."

MAY 30, 1908

PLACE garlands of sympathy on the hero's grave,
Woven in tenderness with hands that are old,
But once were so shapely, strong and so brave
That they blended a nation, in freedom's mould.

Lay on their biers the red, white and blue,
With its cluster of stars, pure and white,
The emblem of freedom, that waved in their view
When the bugler called them to fight.

Ground arms, stand with uncovered head,
Fear not for the manly tear,
But think of the glory of the death instead,
For he smiles in heaven as you honor him here.

He sees but the fragment of the army of yore
Thro' mist of eternity, as the years onward roll,
He stands with outstretched hands on the shore,
To welcome old comrades at the call of the roll.

He loved the old flag, my comrades, as you,
And all thro' that fratricidal strife,
He was not found wanting, he ever was true,
And to keep it unsoiled, gave his life.

The grand army's ranks are thinning apace,
'Tis but the remains of the conquering array,
That passed in review, with powder stained face,
After God gave them a victorious day.

But for some he has now sounded the taps,
Those we are honoring today;
Each year we will don the worn old traps,
'Till we awake at the great reveille.

THE PANTS THAT MOTHER MADE

WE can talk of home and mother, as through this life we go,
Of the rich things that no other would attempt to make them so;
How we used to rob the larder, how we raved about the cake,
But we never even whisper 'bout the pants that Ma could make.

All boys who on a farm have lived until the age of ten,
Have something to be thankful for when they are grown-up men;
They can thank the Lord for the Jersey cow, also the dairy maid
That twitted us about our jeans, those pants that Mother made.

Mother was an artist when it came to making pies;
The bread she made was lovely, brown and light;
She could bind the injured toe, dry the tear up in your eyes,
Teach you how to say your little prayer at night;
She could tell you Injun stories 'till she made you all afraid—
Give us back those happy days, less the pants that Mother made.

I remember when but a boy, I think about sixteen,
A neighbor girl I longed for, that was witty, bright and keen.
It seems to be but yesterday when Mother scrubbed my neck,
And I soaped my hair and brushed it 'till it was nice and slick.

I started out with good intent to win that country maid,
And wore the best clothes that I had—the pants that
Mother made.

And when I looked in the old cracked glass that hung
beside the door,
I thought how very well I looked and needed nothing
more,
Except to say that little speech that God and I only knew;
And I started whistling from the house to see my lovely
Lu.
How Willie came to miss the goal while out on that pa-
rade,
Because they fit so blooming tight—those pants that
Mother made.

The speech was quite original; I had worked it up with
zest;
I met her, choked and stammered—God only knew the
rest.
I tried to hold her little hand; I knew she was very shy,
I thought a kiss would help some, so at that I made a try;
And in the wrestle that followed, poor Willie made a slip,
When, holy horrors! from the rear he heard an awful rip.
His fondest hopes were blighted as he sat there scorning
aid,
Those pants were ripped from stem to stern—the ones
that Mother made.

Well, he sat there sullen, silent, 'till the sun had gone to
rest,
When he left his Lulu's presence he had his face toward
the west;
It became his embarrassing duty to walk backward out of
sight,
So with his back to the eastward, Willie edged away that
night;

He had lost his time and sweetmeats, for he'd a won that
country maid,
If they had bravely stood the strain—the pants that
Mother made.

Ofttimes the slightest accident turns the tide in a man's
career.
Had those pants stood up staunchly, I'd have won that
little dear,
Together with a section of Illinois' most fertile soil;
And I'd have been husking pumpkins, 'stead of boring
here for oil.
But only to the one who knew my speech so well that
night,
Can we trust our future, knowing that He is always right.
So I look upon it as my fate to have had on them tight
breeches,
I might have broken her young heart, instead of bursting
stitches.

Mothers all are jewels, loving well their reckless boys,
Their memory's ever sacred, and our love without alloys.
The mistakes she made in tailoring were all covered by
the aid
She gave when you tore the bosom from the pants that
she had made.

BILL

WHY, Bill, it seems just the other day
That you came here with us to stay;
I was interested from the start
To see how well you played your part.
An' I always loved you—didn't I, Bill?
Then you got sick at the start of the hill,
An' I sat up nights and worried so
For fear that you would never grow.
Didn't I, Bill?

An' then that time, Bill, that you and I
Went to the Doctor—wait, there's a tear in my eye—
It hurt me so to hear you cry;
Then you got boils that came nigh
Killing you outright, as sure as you're born,
And some of those nights were long 'till morn;
But you just fought it to the bitter end,
And bye-and-bye you began to mend.
Didn't you, Bill?

And then you came back, fat and plump,
And Bill, you had grown to quite a lump;
And you smiled and wriggled into my heart,
Yes, you did, Bill, you're mighty smart.
Do you know I was dreaming the other night,
What if angels came all decked in white,
Say come with us where all is still
I 'woke and said, "Don't take my Bill!"
Didn't I, Bill?

BILL

IF YOU WERE MINE

IF you were mine I would not care
If winter days were foul or fair;
I'd work thro' summer's scorching sun,
Thro' autumn rains, or mud, or slime—
If
you
were
mine.

If you were mine you'd be my queen,
An angel from the world unseen;
Your lightest wish would be my will
Thro' cloudy days the sun would shine—
If
you
were
mine.

If you were mine the birds would sing
With sweetest song the forest ring;
The sparkling stream would laugh and play
Their soothing words in rhyme—
If
you
were
mine.

If you were mine this Christmas night,
My dreams are true, I see the light
Of Bethlehem's star, a child is given;
The welkin rings through every clime
You're not just here—
But
you
are
mine.

THE GIRL IN DIXIE

DOWN in the land of Dixie where the cotton blooms and blows,
Where the sun is bright and gleaming, and the crystal rivers flow;
Where the maids are bright and pretty, with teeth of sparkling pearl,
With hair of raven luster, dreamy eyes beneath the curl;
The nose a Grecian profile, a ruby shapely mouth—
She is the handsome child of Dixie, a native of the South.

In her dreamy eyes so liquid, I have tried to read my fate
When the evening sun was setting, or when the hour was growing late.
I have painted her a picture, of the home with joy and bliss,
I would barter all my birthright for the joy of one sweet kiss;
For a drink of luscious nectar from her coral shapely mouth,
I would eat the blazing sunshine that smiles down in the South.

I would eat the blazen sunshine, I would dive in Hell's abyss,
I would drain the mighty ocean if commanded by that Miss;
I would sigh, I would cry, I would drink Red River dry—
But not for her or any other woman would I go off and die.

MEMORIES OF VALENTINE

ONE time I wrote a tender line—
A tender line.
I wrote it to a maiden fair
With tender eyes and woozy hair;
She was my Valentine,
My Valentine.

Her father he was old and mean,
No tenderloin.
And when he saw the line I wrote,
He said, "Your hip and thigh I'll smote;"
And then he entered on the scene,
O, tender-loin.

He grabbed me where my collar slantz,
The ugly brute.
He tried to poke my black eyes out,
He wrung my neck, turned me about
And kicked me in the pantz
With heavy fute (foot).

Years have gone since that tender line—
O, tenderloin!
That foot it quenched the burning fire,
And since that time I've no desire
To write a tender line, my Valentine,
Sweet Valentine.

WHEN MOTHER'S GONE

THE floors are covered o'er with dust,
The stove is getting red with rust,
The dog he howls the livelong day,
Since Mother's gone away.

The dust is thick upon my chair,
There's cobwebs sticking in my hair;
The blooming hens have ceased to lay
Since Mother's gone away.

The grass has grown long and dry,
The old hens cackle, but they lie;
The ice man cheats me every day
Since Mother's gone away.

There is trouble here, to make me drink,
With scrubbing floors, and rugs, and sink;
I stepped upon a tack today,
It hurt me worse since Ma's away.

No man can ever live alone,
When Mother's gone he gnaws a bone;
His bare feet trod thro' sand and clay
When Mother's gone away.

Come back, come back from 'way up North,
We miss you, girl, we know your worth;
We'll drudge and toil the livelong day,
If you'll please hurry home to stay.

AT FIFTY-FIVE

A BROKEN and battered old derelict
On the out-going tide afloat,
Abandoned by youth in the conflict,
A rudderless, aimless old boat;
Beaten by seas of merciless time,
The hand is old at the wheel;
The eye cannot the shoals define
That youth instinctively feel.

At fifty-five the dream is o'er,
It is now the gray of Fall;
God held out to you his bountiful store,
But it is now beyond recall.
The rose has exuded its fragrance to you
The petals have dropped by the way,
The sunshine, the rain, the tremulous dew
Cannot prolong its sweet life one day.

The youthful brook with babbling song
Has swelled the river's breast,
And now majestically swings along
To mingle with the ocean's crest.
The fuels consumed by time's cruel hand,
The heart has no rhythmic tone;
You're only a derelict, pathetic or grand,
As you come, so you go, all alone.

A WARNING TO COLORED BROTHERS

DE comet am a-comin', you niggers mus' look out—
It's gwine to bus' dis worl' in two and put de lights all out;
De passon ob de colored church say de sun will sure stan' still,
Den you chilly blooded niggers will get heated 'til you fill;
De odder night I hearn it roar jes' like a water spout,
Dat comet's gwine to git ye, 'f yo' don' watch out.

So Brudder George and Brudder Bill, you'd better jine de church;
And Sister Sal and Sister Sue don' be left in de lurch;
An' Deacon Sam de time have cum to put dat rooster in
White Man Henry's chicken-coops, for stealin' am a sin;
An' loosen up your old stiff j'ints and pray and sing and shout—
For de comet's gwine to get you ef you don' watch out.
An' Brudder Eaf, de Lawd done seen yo' shootin' craps las' night,
An' saw you flip de dice by hand—you know dat dat's not right;
An' Sister Sue, de Lawd done saw you swipe dat bolt of lace
An' put it 'neath yo'r apron when the clerk done turned his face;
He sees it on yo'r petty-coat when you go gaddin' 'bout—
And the comet's gwine to get you ef you don' watch out.
Yo' men folks been a singin' "Will dere be stars in my crown?"
An' thinkin' of a yaller gal dat lives jes' out en town;
An' you, Amanda Melia Brown, dat in our choir sings,
Ye'd better put yo'r mind on Gawd, 'stead of hats an' things;
For de comet am a-comin', yo'll hear St. Peter shout—
Dat comet's gwine to git ye, ef yo' don' watch out.

WHO'S TO BLAME

LED from the path of virtue,
When the shadows had grown long,
Down where the cardinal lights gleam,
Down 'mid the ribald's song;
Petted by saucy harlots
Who looked with drink-crazed eyes
Into the chasm, eternity,
Away from the smiling skies.

Into that chamber of horrors,
Thro' its vile-smelling stench
Of unclean and blood-smelling women,
The waiter a vile-smelling wench;
Saw we all this in one evening,
While the moon hid her face in her shame,
Tell me, old man, where's the pleasure
To the man who claims he is sane.

Who is to blame for the brothel—
Where shall we fasten the crime?
Just look in your heart, old fellow,
Yours and others, and mine;
It's our palace of Hell—don't forget it—
The reaper reaps just what he sows;
Posterity may still be in dream-land,
Recruits from our own home. "Who knows?"

GOING HOME

SAY, did you ever start for home
At the pull of the old heartstring,
To see the paths where you used to roam
And drink from the old rock spring?
The train that bore you homeward
Seemed to creep 'long like a snail,
The click of the wheels singing onward
As they jumped the splice in the rail;
And you came in sight of Bear Creek,
Where you've sat and fished and fished,
And in your boyhood fancies,
You have dreamed, and wished, and wished,
That the fairy that you've read about
Would come with his team of greys,
And carry you off to fairyland,
A prince to end your days.
And when your journey's ended
And the train is standing still,
No old friends there to meet you
And your eyes begin to fill
At the absence of some friendly face,
At the town so old and worn,
That you ask yourself the question—
Is this where I was born?
Well, you've dreamed your dreams
And the picture don't bring joy,
The things that you are seeing
Are not seen with the eyes of a boy.
But, O kind God, how my heart ached
When I stood before the door,
To be met with the face of a stranger
That I'd never seen before;
I leave the old home with its memories
And go to the old church lot,
Reading these lines on the marble:
"Gone, but not forgot."

TWAIN IS DEAD

On the Death of Mark Twain (Samuel L. Clemens)

THE bells have tolled—his sun has set;
The line of friends is passing by
With leaden tread of funeral step;
The wind is whispering a lonely sigh
For poor, for rich, the great, the small—
The nation stands with lowered head,
And says he's gone beyond recall,
His name revered, tho' Twain is dead.

He loved the world—the world loved him—
He made it laugh with joyous mirth;
In man he ne'er condemned the sin
To him inherent from his birth;
But when he plied his witching pen
Flowers bloomed o'er the invalid bed,
They forget their pain and again were men—
What's left for them since Twain is dead?

Gone where angels always sing,
He'll find a harp that's tuned aright,
And to those airy visions bring
A spirit just as pure and white;
'Mid angel's song he'll find a place
With jeweled crown upon his head,
The same sweet smile upon his face—
He lives forever, though Twain is dead.

THANKSGIVING

THE roar of a war is in our ears,
And our hearts are sad within.
Have we purchased our peace with craven fears?
If so, it's the unpardonable sin.

Can WE thank God, the bloody strife
Is across the rolling wave?
And shirk a duty dearer than life
And thank God for the gold we save?

FRIENDSHIP

IF you should ask of any teacher—
What is best of all the treasures?
How of good things get your measures
Filled to full and overflowing;
If you ask him, he will tell you:
Not from drink, and wine get pleasures.
Not from gold, or silk, or satin,
Not from Greek, or French, or Latin;
But from friendship pure and holy,
From a tree with life's fruit ripened,
Branches of fine men and women.
He would tell you without stipend
How God made in his own image
Men, and women loyal, loyal;
Left it not to families royal,
But to all his lovely creatures,
Kind of heart and sweet of features;
Made he all the men and women
With a hallowed brow of light,
This the toast that now I greet you,
To renew the bond of friendship,
Faithful as the stars of night.

CANANDAIGUA IN A FRENZY

YOU do not laugh and sing and play
With lips serene as yesterday;
Instead, your screaming white-caps yell,
Like a human soul in the depths of Hell.
Are you jealous of the drops of rain
That nourish the rose on the sun-baked plain,
Or are you scared at the lightning's flash,
Are you hysterical at the thunder's crash?
For shame, for shame, on you, sweet lake:
To all your beauty and rhythm forsake.
And stick out your tongue like a naughty kid
Because "Old Jove" pulls off the lid.
Come back and sing your sweetest lay,
I like you better as yesterday.

WHY NOT?

ONCE I was a happy fellow,
In gladsome spring or autumn yellow—
Hunting for some good in man,
Something after God's own plan;
Picked up Tom, who seemed so fine,
Thought I'd found a man divine;
But beneath his velvet hide,
Was something that his face denied.
In his image God had made
That was all his stock and trade;
When I saw the life within,
'Twas a seething mass of sin.
Then I tried George, Dick and Dan
For an honest Godly man;
In each case was faults, I found;
Some apparent, some profound;
And I thought why prick a bubble,

Why hunt disappointments, trouble?
For in every man I meet,
And in women on the street,
I find something good and clean,
Then why pick out that which is mean?

Then I ceased to look within;
Looked for truth instead of sin;
Was surprised the pure in mind—
NEVER will I look behind.

WHEN I AM FIFTY AND YOU ARE FIVE

WHEN I am fifty, and you are five,
And the world to you is bright;
As the morning sun unveils the east
And pushes back the night;
And birds sing blithely—and flowers bloom
'Till the air with perfume's rife,
And your golden hair has no line of care—
For I am fifty—and you are five.

When I am fifty, and you are five,
And you have never a care;
While I see trees with their yellow leaves
Standing bleak and bare;
The spring of youth is beyond recall,
It is parched and blackened by strife,
And the "Night-birds" call—to me 'tis fall—
For I am fifty—while you are five.

When I am fifty, and you are five,
With you life's journey's begun,
The rose strewn path of youth is yours,
While my life's journey's done.
May the darkest night show a ray of light
That will brighten your path of life,
And zephyrs croon, to a life in bloom—
When you are fifty and five.

THAT PRE-NUPTIAL TIN SHOWER

HOW dear to your heart is this, your "tin shower,"
When the "stew-pans" are "stewed" and the buckets turn pail;
While the din in the house is like the clang of a power,
Or a dog racing by with some "cans" on his tail.

The tinware I hand you is bright and full measure
When filled with the happiness drawn from life's spring.
May you look at this bucket as full of sweet pleasures,
And "can" all the strife with the songs that you sing.

VIOLETS

THE buds I send are from a friend,
They match your eyes of blue,
They carry joy from your dear old boy
Because he's found you true.

Their lingering perfume gladdens your room
When the petals are withered and gray;
Yet the message they bring is a voice of spring
And birds sing their roundelay.

I plucked them while here, for you, my Dear,
They'll be crushed, when they come, out flat,
But the love they bring in life's the thing,
From a guy you know that is fat.

WOULDN'T THIS BE A DREAM?

IF the sun was always smiling,
Floating down life's turbid stream,
Filled with scented hours beguiling—
Wouldn't that be a dream?

If your friends were all in harmony,
And the milk of kindness cream,
And life would have no irony—
Wouldn't that be a dream?

When you wouldn't need a backbone,
Nor a safe your gold to screen;
The judge would burn his Blackstone—
Wouldn't that be a dream?

And your banker greets you smiling,
Renews the old note calm, serene,
With nary a curse reviling—
That sure would be a dream.

If politics were played near square,
Where the deck is plainly seen,
And keep the promise given fair—
Wow! that would be a dream.

Some happy days of life are spent
In building castles fair;
In youth our dreams are pleasure bent,
Like bubble filled with air.

In middle life we've drunk the gall,
The fruit, the wine, the cream,
But the yellow days are best of all—
Life's sunsets evening dream.

THE HOME ON THE RIVER HILL

HOW I have dreamed and dreamed to possess my father's estate,
When the evening twilight is fading, and the day is growing late!
How I have conjured in my memory the scenes of rock and rill
And a mirage passes before me—of the home on the river and hill.

I love it, I love it, with a love that's ever true,
From its tangled wooded pathway to the starry dome of blue,
Where the cricket chirps at the window when all but he is still,
And mother's evening song is heard at the home on river hill!

The stranger sees no beauty that lived on that hallowed spot,
Yet the picture I see in life's evening, is by a Master wrought.
At the faces painted on memory's tile my eyes begin to fill
There is one of the dear old Mother—at the home on the river hill.

God took pains in designing, builded it rugged and grand,
Colors that blend, Oh! Divinely, painted by the Infinite hand;
I've traveled along the great white way—drank from the hidden still,
But I'm going back to the home, sweet home—that home on the river hill.

FATHER'S GOT A JOB

NO more he'll cook delicious cakes
In the late or early morn;
No more he'll sleep, 'til the sun awakes
With its golden beams so warm;
No more he'll pose as a wealthy guy,
No more poor farmers rob;
Up with the sun, will be his cry,
For father's got a job.

It's been so long that he forgets
When last he had a place,
It seemed he'd join the never-sweats
And loafed around with grace;
No more he'll join the kids at play
Or leave home with a sob;
No more at home he'll be a jay,
For father's got a job.

His daughter now at school can say
With sincere and girlish laughter,
My father toils from day to day,
Has ceased to be a grafter.
He'll now come home, cross like a bear,
From playing with a snob;
The house will all be hushed with fear,
Since father's got a job.

SPRING TROUBLES

WHEN the springtime skies are bluest,
And maidens' hearts are truest,
And the birds are mating, singing all the while;
When trees are blooming their bloomest
And daylight comes the soonest—
It's April, take your fishing pole and smile.

When wifey's temper's the meanest (This don't go if she hears it)—
And she cleans the house the cleanest,
Then she makes you beat the dusty microbe rugs;
When you climb the ladder highest
You stand like a highdivest,
You are cleaning out the microscopic bugs.

When your lyre is the lyrest.
And your troubles are the direst,
And you're falling over chairs that's in the way,
And you trip and fall the fallingest,
With language that's appallingest,
Then you want to kick sweet April into May.

When your meals are always coldest,
And your wife looks years the oldest,
And the beds all look like scrapheaps, by ging!
You long for day's completest,
When wifey smiles the sweetest,
Before housecleaning days in early spring.

HALLOWE'EN

THIS is the night when Fairies light
And gnomes and brownies dance,
In yellow days—their splendors blaze—
While their spritely ponies prance;
The moon is hid—as if a lid
Concealed her pallid beam,
For turnip night and jack-o-light—
For this is Hallowe'en.

Along Kanawha's winding banks,
'Mid tanglewood and dell,
The sprite that rules the marshal ranks
And o'er us casts his spell—
Shows us the place where lover's face
Is mirrored in the stream,
The face of sweetheart there is traced—
If wished on Hallowe'en.

This is the night when jack-o-light
Casts lurid flickering flame;
When chestnuts ripe are baked aright
And each is given name;
With its noisy pops, the chestnut hops
At your future spouse, I ween,
With blushes red and lowered head—
You are pledged on Hallowe'en.

LADDIE

LADDIE

LAD is dead? Well, well, that's a sin,
The best friend man ever had;
He always looked for what's within,
Tho' clothes were ragged, torn and bad;
Lad really did not have a care
Of how his friends would part their hair.

Once I heard him bark with glee
And run, and yelp, and jump with joy;
And one would wonder how that he
Would love that ragged, dirty boy.
But Lad just looked at the heart within
And that was what Lad liked in him.

Lad was just an ornery, curly cur,
A mongrel dog, not of the royal brood;
Yet on his loyalty there never was a slur,
For thro' the ages past was honest blood.
Lad was just a mangy hybrid, it is true,
But can Lad's faithful acts be said of you?

Lad won no ribbon at a canine show,
He never won a bloody fight;
He was part and parcel of all the dogs you know,
But 'neath his flea-bit hide his heart was right.
There may be some advantages in one's birth,
But nothing better than Lad's on earth.

And when Lad came to take the step,
He never thought of boys who canned his tail,
But shivering at the door he'd yelp,
When opened, whine his mournful tale.
And somehow thro' that veil and fog
He'll find the heaven for an honest dog.

SPRING

THE wind has been in the South for a couple of days. It is mellowed by the sunshine and my old body is being warmed by its breath. The sweet-voiced songsters are beginning to carol from a winter of silence, and the bright, beautiful laughing child of Spring with her fragrance, her variegation in coloring, is here again, to love and enjoy. The Muse whispers to the receptive ear:

O gentle, soothing, balmy spring,
A million tongues your praises sing;
'Mid bursting buds the blue birds flit,
And calves are peeping through the slit
Of Paris gowns, neath silken hose;
The neck is bare where the wish-bone grows,
And if there is no other thing
These signs would indicate it's Spring.

OUR DAY DREAMS

IN the sanctity of our little home,
Away from the toil and strife;
Our day dreams come when we are alone.
They're the happiest moments of life.

The dreams we have twixt downy sheets
May be hazy, or lurid, or wild;
Our battles are fought, we feel defeat,
Our day dreams are soothing and mild.

No holocaust we see or business care,
No falls down, down below;
No maniac roams with disheveled hair
In our day dreams while the zephyrs blow.

The pictures we draw in fancy there,
The castles we build will stand;
The fragrance we breathe of flowers rare
Are nurtured by fancy's hand.

The old easy chair, the grim pictured wall
Where in day dreams we often trace,
The name of loved ones that answered the call,
And our fancy takes shape of a face.

Tho' time has traced his lines in her hair,
The sweet old face that love imparts;
You start when you find her standing there,
The best the bravest of all sweethearts.

ALL HIS LABORS ARE VAIN

I AM the man that wrote the song
On "Kitty's wooden leg";
'Twas I that made the "Goose"
That laid the "golden egg."

I'm the man that trained the Giants
In all points of the game
That put them on the highest round
Of baseball's ladder of fame.

It was I that invented the auto,
Also the pneumatic brake
That will stop a car in thirty feet,
Unless there's a life at stake.

'Twas I that made old Morgan rich
By not following my advice;
I started the panic of last November
Betting on loaded dice.

I wrote all Harding's special messages
He sent to Congress this year;
But my brain factory was on the bumsky
When I made the brains that were there.

I snatched electricity from the blue realm,
Broke it to drive and ride;
I made the machine to register the fare,
But the conductor's hands are all tied.

I invented the mill for distilling the juice
Of Eden's forbidden fruit
That made Mother Eve make dresses;
I designed the Merry Widow so cute.

It is true that I am an author of note,
Of rhymes and philosophical freaks,
But by the long beard of the prophet of old,
I deny writing that story "Three Weeks."

You will see by the above that I'm a wonderful man
In physics and with my versatile pen,
But I doff my lid to that inventive mind
That has designed the double-barrelled hen.

MORAL—It is better to accomplish one great act in life than to attempt a score.

TO OUR GOOD FRIEND $$$$

HAVE you read about the microbes
That infest the dollar bill?
Ninety million so they say
On each bill in the till;
Since reading all about it—
And disease don't seem remote—
I've decided to drop Friend William,
And use a nice clean note,

You can get easy at any bank
So new and clean and white,
But the ones that drive me crazy
Are the ones that are written "at sight."
So what's the use to worry
About the insects that's on Bill?
When a feller never has one
His simple wants to fill.
But I have always noticed
That the man with the largest wad
Is usually among the last ones
To be called to meet his God.
So the Doctor better come again,
Or stick to his box of pills,
For they're indeed, a friend in need,
Those dirty, microbic bills.

THE OLD BUCKET SHOP

HOW dear to their hearts is the wire they attended,
When the blooming old world took a rose tinted view;
How we squirmed and we kicked at the pin that they bended
That broke us in purse, when we left the office quite blue.
The face they recall of the small "Tin-Horn Gambler"
As he dragged from his pockets the shekels so new,
They turned him loose sad, yet a homeless wanderer,
The thieving old bucket shop, the crooked old bucket shop,
The entrancing old bucket shop that we all have known.

How well I remember, I think last September,
I thought I would take just one little flight;
I bought of June wheat—they called it September—
But what the man did to me was simply a fright.

I hear them reviling, while I sit a-smiling
At poor Uncle Sam with his coat off to fight;
The jury's been stung by the shop's smooth conniving
And are ready to give them one long endless night.
The crooked old bucket shop, the skin game bucket shop,
The bucket shop that gets you and deprives you of home.

IF I SHOULD DIE TONIGHT

IF I should die tonight,
And one would come to my cold and lifeless clay,
Take my clammy, stiffening hands, and say,
"Bill, you have fought our battles well,"
I'd rise up, and in my wrath I'd say, "Oh, go to hell!"

If I should die tonight,
And some supineless creature'd come
With flowers for the good I'd done,
I'd push right up that coffin lid
And ask him frankly what he did
While I was here to fan the flame
Of work worth while; then drop dead again.

If I should die tonight,
And take the steps to an unknown land,
And one would come and clasp my hand
And say: "Poor old Bill, he's with the blest;
We pray for calm, eternal rest."
I'd point my finger in his face and say:
"What did you do to smooth the way
Through a life of grief, of tears, of pain?"
I'd tell him what a chump he'd been,
And then drop dead again.

DEM GUYS NEXT DOOR

THERE'S a pigeon on my awning,
There's some sparrows on my sill,
The pigeon's busy cooing
While the youngster sucks his bill;
But I never mind the sparrow
Or the pigeon any more;
But it digs into my marrow
At the guys that sit next door.

When my work progresses fairly
At the closing of the day
I hear them say, deal squarely,
How much will it cost to stay?
Come on, old sport, put in your dough,
Don't let 'em make you sore,
A pair of ladies, don't you know,
I hear from my next door.

And then it's quiet for a spell,
Just riffling, shuffling sound,
Then somebody says, "O, hell,"
Go deal those cards around.
I hold four kings and a little ace,
That makes an awful roar."
And what is said is out of place
From the guys that are next door.

WHEN THE ICE IS IN THE RYE

WHEN the cold winds blow a hurricane across the northern coast,
An' you stir the blooming fire just to give your shins a roast;
An' you drink a quart of bitter dope to cure that hacking cough,

An' you drink your Tom and Jerrys with your pedals in
the trough,
It is then you think of Texas with her big, bright, smiling
sky,
And swear you'll cuddle in her arms when the ice is in
the rye.

When old March, that windy, bilious, bilging, roaring
month,
That digs down to the marrow and your clothing don't
give warmth,
An' your nose is like a sugar tree, sap running down your
lip;
An' you curse the beastly weather as the "boneset tea"
you sip,
An' as the goose flesh creepeth down your quivering back,
you sigh—
For old Texas' balmy weather when the ice is in the rye.

When you go to bed at night time, an' between the sheets
you creep,
'N instead of prayers its curses, for there's snow upon
your sheet;
The alarm clock with its rattle indicates another day,
'N you crawl out like a snail from your eiderdown and
hay,
'N you long for dear old Texas where the mornings all
are dry,
'N the cactus is a bloomin' and the ice is in the rye.

If you come to Texas you'll spike the cannons of that
cough,
But altho' the sky is smiling, I advise don't take 'em off;
Altho' she's sweet and pleasant, yet she holds in her em-
brace
One of them ding-burned northers that has whiskers on
his face;
And if you've donned the B. V. D.'s it may git an' you'll
die,
And the flavor will be lost to you, when the ice is in the
rye.

OPTIMISTIC BILL

DID you ever know Bill Davis?
Well, I'm sure you've missed a treat.
Bill allus had a smile for you
No matter how bad he was beat.
In a hoss trade, or a land deal,
It was all the same to Bill;
He smiled and took his medicine
No matter how bitter the pill.

Well, Bill planted twenty acres of wheat
Down in his bottom land,
And when the wind rippled through it
I tell you it looked mighty grand;
But an awful storm struck that valley,
They called it a water spout;
It flooded the entire valley
And washed Bill's wheat all out.
The neighbors all came to condole him,
But Bill, with a smile so bland,
Said, "Now, don't worry, neighbors,
You see it has left the land."

Bill had hardly recovered
From the effect of the water spout,
When his barn was struck by lightning,
But he got his horses out.
Again his friends all came
To view his misery;
But with a smile perpetual,
"I've saved my stock you see.
And then the old barn was rotten,
And for some time has been too small—
I'll build me up another one,
I'll have it done by fall."

Do you know that persecuted feller
Just got started to build that barn,
When a cyclone struck his residence
And blew it off his farm.
Again the neighbors came to Bill
And offered their sympathy,
And Bill smiled on and pointed out
That he'd saved his family.
He thought the house was far too small
And he was going to tear it down,
He needed a bigger and better one—
He'd have the lumber sent out from town.

Bill was the very best feller
That ever the Lord let live;
Wherever charity was needed
Bill was always willing to give.
There's no use of us talking, neighbor,
His equal was hard to find,
For no matter how caustic his neighbors got
They were always sure to find
Bill beaming down on them;
No matter how uncomfortable the seat.
But the hardest luck Bill ever had
Was when he lost *both of his feet.*
His good friends all were so sorry
Of the accident, so I'm told,
And thought to hear him complaining,
But Bill, he only smiled wanly,
And said, "Well, they always were cold."

I'd rather have Bill's disposition
And go through life on them pegs,
Than go about borrowing trouble
Like some that have good legs.

THE GRAFTER

THE grafter, O the grafter, has no reason to complain,
The money from the sweat-shops and the babies are his gain;
He scorns the decent people, he dotes on vice and crime,
Thinks the preachers in the pulpit should all be doing time;
He sneers at buoyant laughter, and he chokes the sweetest song,
To his degenerate brain, God is always wrong.

The grafter, O the grafter, have you met him in your path,
Have you seen his sordid head-lines, and words of vicious wrath?
Instead of printing upright news, the sheet is full of lies,
He is the master criminal, that good men all despise.
We can stand the ignoramus, the idiot and all—
But we MUST crush this viper, the grafter and his gall.

TO MY BOOK

THE days I have wasted on you, little book,
The hours I have spent in my den's quiet nook,
Where you and I have conspired alone,
Weaving our fancies, and dreaming of home.

You're selfish of me as a lover true—
Awake you beckon—I dream of you;
You have taken me away from friends that are dear,
You have made me a hermit, without shedding a tear;
For the friends that I've lost, but the time I've employed,
In the creation of you has been greatly enjoyed.

Do I love you, old friend? Aye, look in my heart,
Don't you see you're myself, and that the best part?
How well do I know you and all that's within
Each of us. The only ones wronged by my devotional sin
Are friends—some unloyal, yet some that are true,
But I never can tell them what I can tell you.

Sometimes you take me from business away,
But in that you are wrong, for there'll come a day,
A decision is made twixt you and my bread,
Then the wise will be wiser, will not point to their head,
When we pass along, but will grasp the hard hand
That has fondled you so tenderly, my silent brigand.

But wherever I go I'll find none that will cleave
Like you, my old friend; nowhere on earth can I leave
My joys and my sorrows, where no one will look
As on your printed pages, my own little book.
The thoughts that you hold will attract not the eye
Of the critic or scholar, good-bye, good-bye.

THE APOLOGY

I COULDN'T think of living in this beautiful world of ours
Without poetical thoughts—with a pathway full of flowers.
A man who does not sometime rhyme, society should him disown,
For the savage still is in him, and his wild oats yet unsown.
He stunts the pretty pictures that in his mind would last,
His presence turns the forest leaves, like winter's icy blasts.
He never sees the little birds darting in the spring,
He never sees the bursting buds, nor hears the robin sing,
He's never seen a great sea wave lash a reeling ship,
He's never sat with his sweetheart and listened to the drip

Of the gurgling and the murmuring of the little woodland
stream
As it rolled and tumbled to the sea in a visionary dream.
Yet these are commonplace visions seen by poets each
day.
Cultivate your rhythmic inheritance, you'll find in it
good pay.
For we all have it in us—to you it may seem but a spark,
Dream it, read it, and write it, it may turn to a flame in
the dark.
And when in the sear and the yellow and darkness, and
you are alone,
Take up the pad and the pencil, create loving memories
of home.

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